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BIBLE STORY BOOK

JESUS IS OUR FRIEND

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·BIBLE · STORY· ·BOOK·

BY·FRANCES·WELD·DANIELSON

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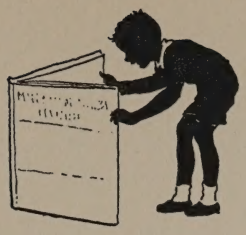

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IN THE BEGINNING

I. A POEM

A great while ago somebody made up a poem about the beginning of the world. It may have been a father who told it to answer the questions of his children. It may have been a poet who wished other people to know what he believed about the beginning. Nobody knows who made it up. Nor does this poetry rhyme. There are poems that do not need to rhyme to tell us they are poetry. This is the poem, with some of its big words made little:

THE FIRST VERSE

In the beginning God made the sky and the earth.
And the earth was covered with water;
And darkness was over the deep water;
And God thought of light.
And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

2 And God saw the light, that it was good.
And God divided the light from the darkness.
And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.
And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

THE SECOND VERSE

And God said, "Let there be a space above the waters."
And God called the space above the waters the sky.
And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

THE THIRD VERSE

And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.
And God called the dry land Earth; the gathering together of the waters called he Seas.
And God saw that it was good.
And God said, "Let the earth put forth grass, plants that shall have seeds, and fruit-trees bearing fruit"; and it was so.
The earth brought forth grass, plants with seeds, and trees bearing fruit.

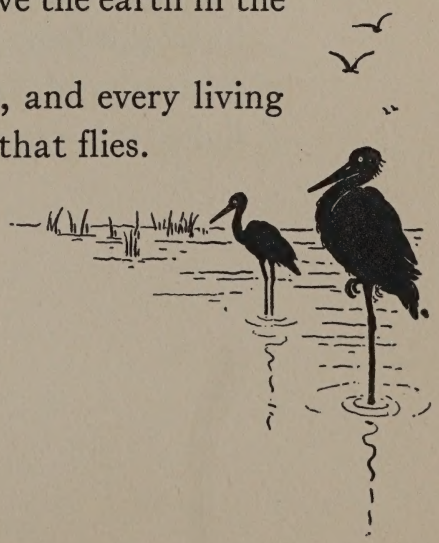
And God saw that it was good.
And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

THE FOURTH VERSE

And God said, "Let there be lights in the sky to divide the day from the night; and let them divide time into days and years, and years into seasons. And let them give light to the earth"; and it was so.
And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the smaller light to rule the night; he made the stars also.
And God put them in the sky to give light to the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.
And God saw that it was good.
And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

THE FIFTH VERSE

And God said, "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the sky."
And God made the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that swims, and every bird that flies.



4 And God saw that it was good.
And God blessed them and said, "Let the fishes increase in the seas, and let the birds bring forth more birds."
And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

THE SIXTH VERSE

And God said, "Let there be living creatures on the earth —cattle, and those that crawl, and all kinds of animals"; and it was so.
And God made the beasts, and the cattle, and every creature that crawls upon the ground.
And God saw that it was good.
And God said, "Man shall be made in my image. He shall have power over the fish of the seas, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every crawling thing that crawls upon the earth."
And God made man in his own image; in the image of God he made him. He made both man and woman.
And God blessed them and said unto them, "You shall have children. You shall have power over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing on the earth."

And God said, "I have given you every plant, and every tree bearing fruit. To you it shall be for food.
"And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air, and to everything that crawls upon the earth, I have given plants for food"; and it was so.
And God saw everything that he had made, and it was very good.
And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

THE SEVENTH VERSE

And the sky and the earth were finished.
And the seventh day God finished his work; and he rested on the seventh day.
And God blessed the seventh day, and made it a day of rest and worship.

II. A STORY

Somebody else told a story about the beginning as he thought it was—the beginning of the world, and of people, and of wrong, and of suffering. This story must have been told in the long-ago days when nobody thought it strange for animals to talk, or for any unusual thing to

happen. I think it must have been told by a man who wanted the whole world to know God and to please him. This is the story:

God made a man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life, and he became a living person.

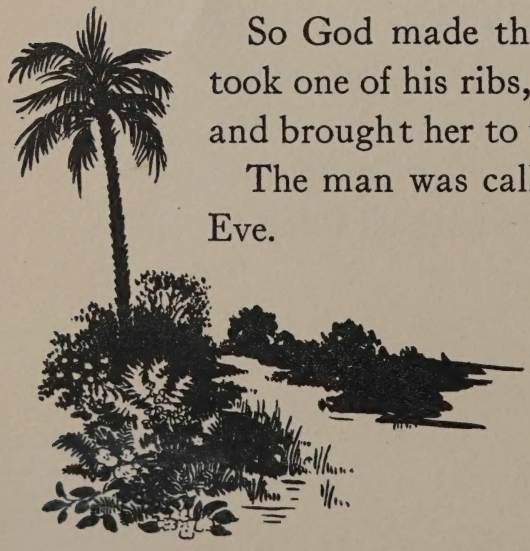
And God planted a garden in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had made. And out of the ground God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food. And a river flowed through Eden to water the garden. And God put the man in the garden to care for it.

Out of the ground God made every beast and every bird, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called them, became their names. The man gave names to the cattle and to the birds and to the animals.

And God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a wife."

So God made the man fall into a deep sleep and he took one of his ribs, and from the rib he made a woman, and brought her to the man, and she became his wife.

The man was called Adam, and Adam called his wife Eve.



In the middle of the garden was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and God said, "Of every tree in the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you must not eat."

Now the serpent said to the woman, "Has God said, 'You shall not eat the fruit of any tree in the garden'?"

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, except the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden. God has said, 'You must not eat it nor touch it.' "

The serpent tempted the woman to eat it. She saw it was good for food, and delightful to look at, so she ate and she gave it to her husband, and he ate.

And they heard the voice of God as he walked in the garden in the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from God among the trees of the garden.

And God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

And Adam said, "I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid, and I hid myself."

And God said, "Have you eaten of the fruit of the tree that I told you you should not eat?"

And the man said, "The woman that you made for me gave me the fruit, and I ate."

And God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?"

And the woman said, "The serpent tempted me and I ate."

And God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you shall crawl in the dust forever, and people shall hate you."

To the woman he said, "You shall have pain and suffering."

And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to your wife and have eaten of the fruit of the tree, when I said, 'You shall not eat it,' the ground shall bring forth thorns and thistles, and you shall work hard to make food grow."

So Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden to suffer and to work, and so to learn to be good.

A PEACEMAKER

Once upon a time two men were traveling—Lot and his uncle, Abraham. Abraham and Lot each had a large company traveling with him, and as they traveled there was much noise and confusion. This was not the noise of puffing engines, or shrieking whistles, or the honk of automobiles. The journey was made long before there were trains or automobiles. No; the noise came from herds of cows and goats—thousands of them trampling the ground, tossing their horns, and filling the air with their cries. Flocks of sheep pattered along, baaing. Tall camels carried men on their backs, or were heavily loaded with folded tents. Herdsmen ran to and fro, cracking their whips and shouting to the animals.

Leading the great herds of animals and directing them where to go was Abraham, who had traveled in this place before, and who was bringing his family with him. Close behind him was Lot, with his wife and children.

At last Abraham gave the signal to stop. The camels

knelt. Their loads of tents were taken off and set up. The herdsmen rounded up their cattle and let them feed on the green grass of the fields. Abraham's wife and Lot's wife arranged the dishes and food and rugs and clothing in their tents, just as your mothers would unpack your goods in new houses. There was a little village of tents. The journey, with its heat and dust and noise, was over. In this quiet place they would make their homes.

But the tents had hardly been set up when shouts were heard and the loud, angry voices of the herdsmen. They were quarreling, because there was not enough grass for all the animals, and each herdsman wanted his cattle to be fed. Part of the animals belonged to Abraham. Part belonged to Lot. Abraham's herdsmen tried to get the best fields for his cattle. Lot's herdsmen tried to get the best fields for his. The same thing happened when they watered their animals. There was not room enough for all, so each herdsman tried to crowd in his animals first. The air was filled with the sound of cross words, and angry cries, and blows.

Abraham and Lot came out from the tents where they had hoped to have such peaceful homes. They heard the noise of quarreling and watched their herdsmen fightin g

They could see that there was not room for the thousands of animals that were eager to feed and drink.

Abraham said to Lot, "Let there be no quarrel between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are uncle and nephew. The whole land is yours to choose where you will live. Go wherever you like. If you will take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if you will take the right hand, then I will go to the left."

Lot looked about him. Down below were green fields, fresh and well watered. Everywhere else there were stony hills. Lot chose the green fields for himself and his cattle. He packed up his tents, his herdsmen drove his animals on, and he went to live in a place beautiful as a garden.

Abraham the peacemaker made his home in the stony hills. God loved Abraham for what he had done, and promised to take care of him and his children and his grandchildren forever.

FINDING A WELL

There was to be a feast in honor of the little boy, Isaac. The cooks were cooking food for it. Isaac's mother, Sarah, saw that they did their work well. His father, Abraham, told the men who kept his animals what sheep should be killed and roasted. Everywhere there was bustle and hurry and excitement in getting ready for the party that would show how glad everybody was that the little Isaac was growing from a baby to a boy.

All this happened in a village of tents. These tents belonged to Isaac's father, Abraham. There were tents to work in, and tents to sleep in, and tents to eat in. There were tents for the cooks, and tents for the men who took care of the animals, and tents for the servants who waited upon Abraham and Sarah. Outside the tents were fields where sheep grazed, and herds of cows and goats that gave milk for all.

Everybody seemed happy except one boy of thirteen. This was Ishmael. Before Isaac had been born Ishmael

had been the only boy in the family. It was not pleasant for him to see so much attention paid to another boy—and one who was hardly more than a baby.

The day of the party came, and Ishmael made himself very disagreeable, making fun of Isaac. This made the proud mother, Sarah, angry. She said to Abraham, "This boy and his mother must be sent away."

Now Abraham loved the boy. To be sure, his mother, Hagar, was only a servant, but Abraham was a kind man, who could not bear to treat any one cruelly. He loved God, and at times like this he always asked God what to do. It seemed to him he heard God saying to him, "It is best that they should go. I will take care of Ishmael."

Early the next morning Abraham called Hagar. He gave her bread and a bottle of water, which she put on her shoulder. He put Ishmael's hand in hers and sent them away.

When the day's work began in the village of tents, the boy and his mother were far off. They heard no lowing cows, ready to be milked. They saw no white sheep being led into the pastures. They heard no talking and laughing. They could not see a single tent. There was only the sky

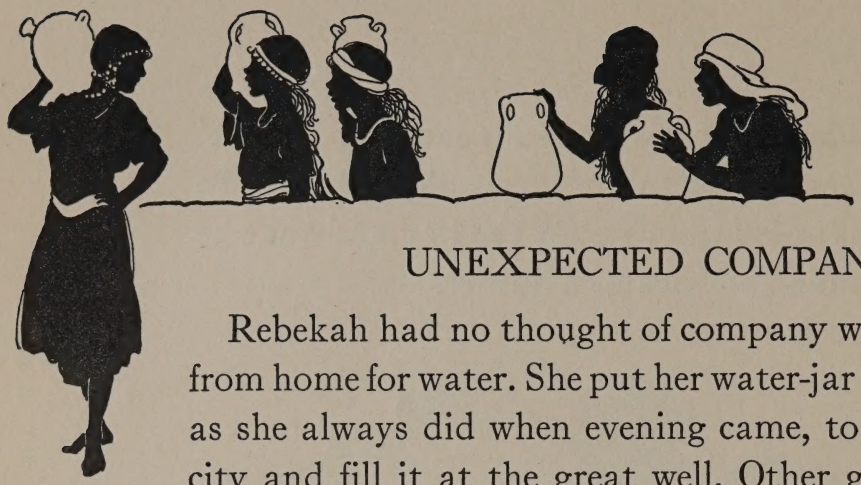
above them and the sand beneath. There were only each other to speak to. It was very lonely.

It was hot, too. They drank often. After awhile when Hagar took the bottle from her shoulder, she had to tip it so that her boy could drink. When he had finished there was none left. Soon he was back again with parched lips. The bottle was empty. His thirst grew greater. His throat ached. His whole body burned with fever. She laid him under a shrub. He begged for water. She had nothing for him. She went a little way off and sat down and cried.

Then the thought of God came to her. Surely God would hear the voice of her boy! She should not be afraid. Surely God wished her boy to live and grow up! She wiped away her tears and looked about her. Why, there was a well of water! Her eyes had been too full of tears to see it before. She felt as though God himself had opened her eyes. Her child need not die! She hurried to the well with her bottle, and filled it. She took it to Ishmael and poured water between his lips. Again and again and again he drank, and then he slept. He would get well.

Hagar knew now that she and her boy were not alone out here where all they could see was the sand and the sky. God was here.

You will be glad to know that Hagar and Ishmael made a home here and found other people. You will be glad to know that God did care for the boy and that he grew up to be a man and became a hunter.



UNEXPECTED COMPANY

Rebekah had no thought of company when she started from home for water. She put her water-jar on her shoulder as she always did when evening came, to go outside the city and fill it at the great well. Other girls joined her, each one with a water-jar on her shoulder, and together they left the city and walked toward the well. This was a common sight every evening.

But what was not so common was the group outside at the well. Gathered around it were men on camels. The girls drew nearer. They counted the camels. There were ten, and on each camel's back was a man. One man seemed to be giving orders to the rest, and as he spoke, each driver made his camel kneel, and got off. Who were these men, and why had they come?

They saw the chief man kneel as though he were praying, and as he knelt, Rebekah and the other girls came to the well. Rebekah bent low as she filled her jar full of water. She put it on her shoulder. Rebekah was very beautiful. She looked so as she came from the well, with her jar of

water on her shoulder. To her surprise the stranger she had left kneeling was running toward her.

"Give me to drink, I beg of you," he cried, "a little water from your jar."

"Drink, sir," Rebekah answered, and let down her jar, and gave him water.

When he had finished drinking she said, "I will get water for your camels too, till they have drunk all they want."

She hurried and emptied her jar into the trough for animals, and ran to the well, where she filled it again. Camels are great drinkers and you remember there were ten, so Rebekah had to fill her jar again and again and again before the last one was satisfied. The stranger did not speak but he watched her as she went back and forth from the well to the trough.

As the last camel stopped drinking the stranger handed Rebekah a gold ring and two gold bracelets.

"Whose daughter are you?" he said. "Tell me, is there room at your father's house for us to stay tonight?"

"I am the daughter of Bethuel," said Rebekah. "We have straw and food for the camels and room for you and your men."

The stranger bowed his head, and Rebekah was sure she heard him praying. Then she ran home, to tell her family the news of the ten men and camels that were coming to spend the night, and to show them the gifts of gold the stranger had brought.

Rebekah had hardly told the news when her brother, Laban, started out to meet the stranger. He ran till he reached the well.

"Come," he said to the stranger, "why do you stay here? The house is ready. There is room for the camels."

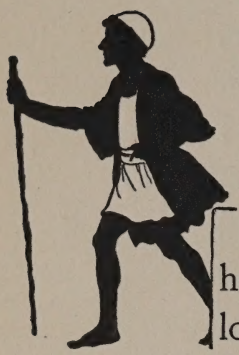
So the stranger and his men and his camels went to the city and stopped at the home of Rebekah's family. Laban helped take off the camels' harnesses and packs and gave them food to eat and straw to lie upon. People in those times wore sandals, which they dropped off before coming in the house, so the most polite thing to be done for a guest was to wash his hot and dusty feet. This most polite thing was done for the stranger and his men.

Food was brought for the stranger, but he said, "I will not eat till I have told my errand. I am Abraham's servant, and he sent me here to get a wife for his son, Isaac. I was afraid I should not choose wisely, so, as I and my men waited by the well, I prayed that I might know the right

maiden by her answering, when I should say, 'Give me, I beg of you, a little water from your jar to drink,' 'Both drink, and I will also get water for your camels.' Before I had finished praying, Rebekah came with her jar upon her shoulder, and went to the well and got water. I said to her, 'Let me drink, I beg of you,' and she hurried and let down her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels water.' I asked her whose daughter she was, and she said Bethuel's. I gave her the gold ring and the gold bracelets, and I thanked God for leading me to the daughter of my master's relative."

Then he brought out silver jewelry and gold jewelry and clothing and gave them to Rebekah, and he gave to her brother and her mother precious things. They ate and drank and were happy together.

Rebekah's family made the ten men very comfortable overnight, and the next day Rebekah mounted a camel and rode away with Isaac's servant to be the wife of his master.



JACOB'S DREAM

A young man was starting on a journey to his uncle's home. The young man's name was Jacob. This was the first long journey he had ever taken, and he was to go alone.

Jacob's visit would be a surprise to his uncle, for there was no way of letting him know he was coming. You see, it was long, long ago, when there were no telegraphs, or telephones, or post-offices. There were no trains, either, and no trolley-cars, and no automobiles. It would be a long journey and a lonely one.

At Jacob's home it was never lonely. He lived in a tent. He and his brother took care of herds of cows and flocks of sheep and goats. At his Uncle Laban's home there would be more cows and sheep and goats, but on the long, long journey between he would never hear the moo of a cow or the baa of a sheep. There would be no hurrying about to get the cows milked. There would be no father or mother or brother to speak to.

So Jacob started on his way, thinking that he was all alone. At first it didn't matter, for by just looking over

his shoulder he could see his home. The sounds of the animals and the shouts of their keepers went with him. But as he went on farther and farther the sounds grew fainter, and at last stopped. He did not turn his head any more, for his home was out of sight.

The sun, which had been high in the sky, reached the top of the western hills and then slipped below. Soon night would be here—night with no bed and no home and not a person to speak to. Jacob looked around for a stone that would do for a pillow, and lay down upon the ground. Looking up he saw the stars coming out, one after another. He saw, too, the rocks, like stone steps, so high they almost touched the sky.

It was very still and very lonely. He fell asleep.

And Jacob dreamed. In his dream he saw a ladder, much like the stone steps that nearly touched the sky, only that this ladder of his dream really did touch the sky. Up and down the ladder went angels of God, and God himself stood beside Jacob and spoke to him.

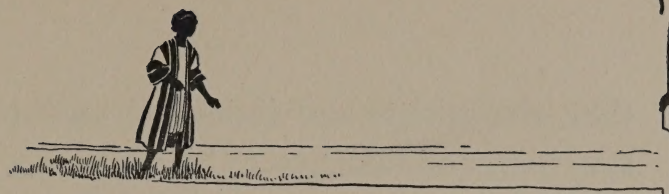
"I am God," he said, "God, whom your father and your grandfather loved. The land on which you lie shall belong to you. I am with you, and will keep you, and will bring you back again. I will not leave you."

Jacob woke from his sleep, and he said, "God is in this place, and I did not know it." Then he slept until it was morning and the sun lighted up the world.

As he lifted his head from his pillow of stone he remembered his dream. Even in this lonely place he was not alone. God was with him. So he set up the stone to help him to remember God, and he said, "If God will be with me, and will take care of me on this journey, and will give me bread to eat and clothes to wear, and bring me safe home, I will give a part of all I have to God."

Then he went on his way. After days and days he heard again the same sounds he had heard when he left his own home—cows mooing and sheep baaing, and men calling to the animals. He stopped at a well. Toward him came his cousin Rachel with her sheep. When she found he was her cousin, she kissed him and ran to get her father.

Jacob's journey was over. He was not lonely any more. And even on a long journey he would not be lonely again, for he knew now that wherever he was, there was God.



THE STORY OF JOSEPH

Joseph was his father's favorite. It was to Joseph that Jacob gave a coat of many colors. He showed plainly that he loved this boy of seventeen better than the ten brothers who were older or even Benjamin the youngest. Joseph's brothers hated him for this. They hated him, too, because he told their father when they did wrong, and because he bragged of dreams in which they bowed down to him, as if he were a great man. They could not speak a pleasant word to him.

One day these brothers were taking care of their sheep far away from home. They looked across the fields and saw far off a boy in a coat of many colors coming toward them.

"See, this dreamer comes!" they said, making sport of him. "Let us kill him, and throw him into one of the pits, and we will say, 'A wild beast has killed him.' Then we shall see how his dreams turn out!"

"No, we will not kill him," cried Reuben. "We will just throw him into this pit." For Reuben was kinder

than the others, and thought he would come back and save him, and take him to his father.

When Joseph came to his brothers they took hold of him roughly. They stripped off his coat, the coat of many colors. They threw him into a pit. And here at the bottom of a deep hole lay the boy who had taken a long journey just to bring messages from their father. Joseph called to them to take him out—to have pity, but they sat near the pit eating and never answered a word.

They looked up from their food and saw a caravan of merchants riding camels on their way to Egypt.

"Come," Judah said, "let us sell Joseph to the merchants."

The next thing Joseph knew he was being lifted out of the pit and put on a camel. Looking back, he saw his brothers counting over twenty pieces of money.

But what should they tell their father? They hurriedly killed a goat, dipped the coat of many colors into the blood, and took it to him.

"We have found this," they said. "We do not know whether it is Joseph's coat or not."

Jacob knew it. "It is my son's coat!" he said. "A wild beast has killed him. Joseph must be torn in pieces!"

He cried bitterly. His sons tried to comfort him. He could not be comforted.

In the meantime, as the brothers well knew, Joseph rode on a camel's back toward Egypt.

Once in Egypt, Joseph was again sold—this time to a captain of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, who liked the looks of this handsome boy. God was with Joseph and helped him to do his work well. The captain watched him. He saw how careful he was in his work. He saw that God was with him. By and by he trusted him with all the care of his house and his lands.

Once more a sad thing happened to Joseph. A wicked woman had him put in prison. But even in prison God was with Joseph. The prison keeper saw how faithfully Joseph did any task he gave him, so he became a favorite of his. He trusted Joseph and put him in charge of the other prisoners.

The years passed, and Joseph was thirty years old. His fame as a good man who was helped by God had reached Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Pharaoh sent for him to come from prison to help him, and when he saw how Joseph could be trusted, and how good his plans were, he made him a ruler over Egypt, next in power to himself. Instead

of prison clothes Joseph was dressed like a great man, with a gold chain about his neck, and Pharaoh's own ring on his finger. Much more grain grew than the people of Egypt could eat, so Joseph had all that was left stored away in great storehouses, for he knew years would come when no grain would grow.

After seven years the storehouses were bursting with grain, and well it was, for seven years came when no grain would grow. Then Joseph had the storehouses opened, and sold grain to the hungry people.

Away back in Joseph's old home there was hunger, too, and one day ten dusty travelers bowed low before the great man, Joseph, and he knew that his boyhood dream had come true—these were his brothers.

The brothers never once guessed that this great man, in fine clothes, who talked in the language of Egypt, was their brother Joseph. He did not tell them. He was very stern with them. He pretended to believe that they were spies.

They said, "We are not spies. We are telling you the truth. We are twelve brothers, only one is lost, and one, the youngest, is with his father."

"Prove that you are telling the truth by going back and

getting your youngest brother," Joseph said. "I will give you grain, but one of you must stay in prison till you return."

The brothers looked at each other in distress. "We deserve this," they said. "We would not listen to our brother Joseph when he cried to us."

They little knew that the great man, who spoke the Egyptian language, understood every word they said. He had to turn away to wipe tears from his eyes, but still he was stern, to test them, and he took Simeon as prisoner.

Back home they went with grain on their donkeys' backs. When they opened the bags they found the money they had paid had been put back into the bags. This frightened them, and Jacob, their old father. But worse still was the news that Benjamin must go back with them.

"Joseph is dead," he mourned, "and Simeon in prison, and you wish to take Benjamin away. I cannot let him go!"

But the grain was soon eaten, and there was nothing to do but to let Benjamin go. So again ten dusty travelers stood before Joseph.

"Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke?" was the first thing the great man asked them.

"He is well," they answered, bowing low.

Joseph's eyes fell on Benjamin. "Is this your youngest brother?" he asked.

Then he stepped quickly into another room to hide his tears. He longed to put his arms about Benjamin, but the brothers must be further tested. He came back, and they ate dinner.

After dinner the brothers and Simeon started for home again, their donkeys loaded with grain. They had not gone far when a servant of Joseph caught up with them and said, "You have robbed my master of his silver cup!"

"Search us, and if you find the cup with one of us, that one shall be your slave!" they answered.

The bags were opened, and the silver cup was found in Benjamin's bag.

In terror they returned to Joseph. Judah spoke for them. "O sir," he said, "do not be angry! We have a father, an old man. Benjamin is his youngest child. His next oldest brother is lost. Our father loves this youngest one. He will die if we come home without him. Let me stay and be your slave. How can I go back to my father without his youngest son?"

Then Joseph knew that his brothers had become more

"IS THIS YOUR YOUNGEST BROTHER?"

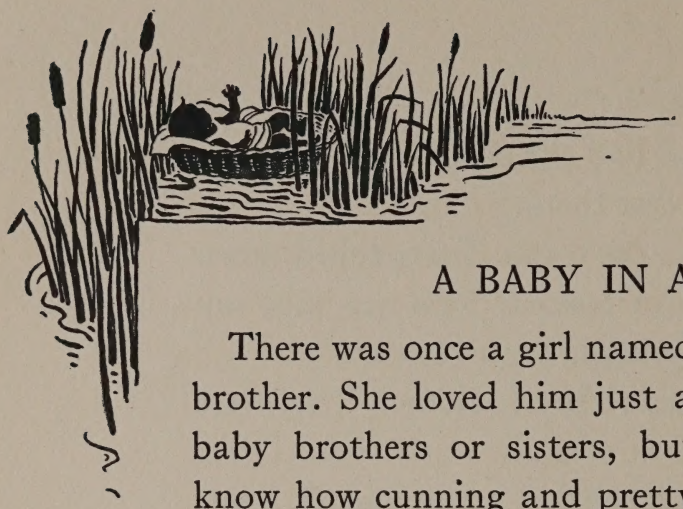
truthful and kinder. He had had the silver cup hidden in Benjamin's bag of grain to test them.

He sent all strangers from the room. Tears rolled down his cheeks as he said, "I am Joseph. You are sure my father still lives? See! I am Joseph, your brother."

His brothers did not answer. They could not. They were surprised and frightened.

"Come near me!" Joseph cried. "I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold. Do not sorrow, or be angry with yourselves because you sold me. God has been with me. It was God's plan that I should come to Egypt, so that I can give you food, and keep you alive. It was not you that sent me here, but God. He has made me a ruler in Egypt. Hurry to my father and say to him, 'God has made Joseph ruler of Egypt. He wishes you to come there and live—you and your children and your grandchildren, your sheep and your cattle. He will take care of you.' Hurry, and bring my father!"

Then he kissed them, and they talked together and they went back with their great news to Jacob. And one day an old father, who for years had believed his son was dead, came to live with him for the rest of his life.



A BABY IN A BASKET

There was once a girl named Miriam who had a baby brother. She loved him just as much as you love your baby brothers or sisters, but her playmates did not know how cunning and pretty he was. She did not tell them. They did not even know that she had a baby brother. Her father and mother had told her to keep it a secret. Nobody must see him. Nobody must hear him cry. Nobody must guess there was a baby boy in that house. The father did not speak of him. The mother hushed his cries. The sister never took him outdoors.

The reason this baby boy had to be hidden was because Pharaoh, the king of the country, was throwing baby boys into the river—all the baby boys of the men who worked for him. And this baby boy's father worked for the king. So you cannot wonder that the father never spoke of him. You cannot wonder that the mother hushed his cries. You cannot wonder that the sister Miriam kept the secret.

When the baby was three months old the mother could

not hide him any longer. He was too big. He cried too loudly. So she thought of another way to save him. She knew that the king had a good daughter, the princess. She thought that if the princess could see her baby, she would love him and save him from being drowned. She knew the place where the princess came down to the river to bathe. She thought of putting her baby in a basket among the reeds on the river bank, where the princess would see him and love him and save him. God helped the mother to think of this lovely plan—maybe when she prayed at night, or maybe when she sang a hymn in the morning.

So she took a little basket made of reeds from the river bank, and daubed it with slime and pitch, so no water could get in. She carried it to the bank of the river, where the tall green reeds grew. This was the place where the princess came to bathe. She put the baby in the basket and left him there.

But she did not leave him alone—oh, no! Miriam stood where she could watch and see whether the princess would come and save him. She looked up the path. No one was coming. She listened. She heard nothing but the swish of the water and the wind in the reeds. The baby slept.

But what was that? The sound of talking! Yes, there were women coming. They were the princess' maids. And there was the princess! Miriam crept nearer—but not near enough to be noticed. The princess and her maids walked along the river bank. Would they see the baby? Yes, the princess was pointing to him. She was sending a maid to get the strange thing she saw floating among the reeds. She was looking down into the baby's face. Miriam crept nearer. Her brother cried. The princess looked very sorry.

"This is one of the children of my father's workmen," she said.

Miriam was close beside her now. "Shall I go and call a nurse to nurse the child for you?" she asked.

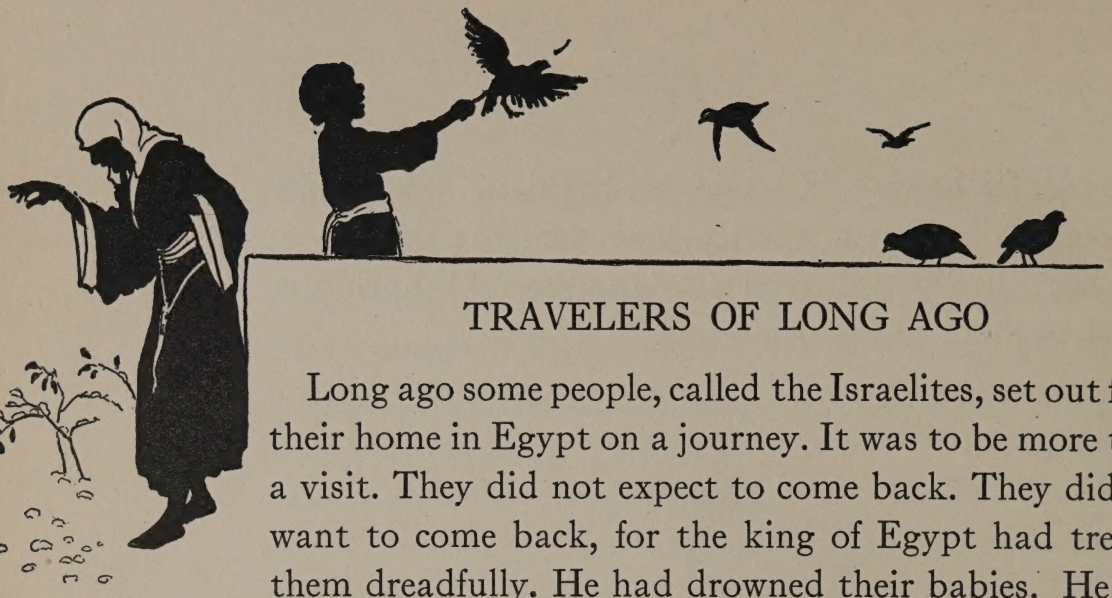
"Go," said the princess.

Miriam fairly flew home. It was only a moment before she was back again, bringing her mother—the mother of the baby who lay in a basket. The princess looked up.

"Take this child away and nurse it for me," she said. "I will pay you." For the princess had taken the child to protect. The king would never harm him. He belonged to her.

So the mother took her own baby home. And beside

her walked a happy girl—Miriam, his sister. She would not need to keep it a secret any longer that she had a baby brother. She could even tell his name—for the princess had given him a name—Moses.



TRAVELERS OF LONG AGO

Long ago some people, called the Israelites, set out from their home in Egypt on a journey. It was to be more than a visit. They did not expect to come back. They did not want to come back, for the king of Egypt had treated them dreadfully. He had drowned their babies. He had made the men work just as if they were animals, and whipped them. They could hardly wait to get away. Moses and Aaron were the leaders of the Israelites. Moses, you will remember, had been saved from being drowned by a princess when he was a baby. He was a man now, and he and Aaron had begged the king to let the people go, but he would not. Then trouble had come to the king, and he thought it was because he was keeping the Israelites, who wanted to go. So he called Moses and Aaron by night and told them to go, and to hurry.

The Israelites went just as they were. They did not stop to bake the bread that was already mixed, but took the dough. The men wrapped up the kneading-troughs, and carried them on their shoulders. They carried tents to

sleep in. The women asked their neighbors for extra clothes and for jewels. The Israelites had big flocks of sheep and goats and cows. These were to go with them. "On the train?" you will ask. Oh, no! it was long ago and there were no trains. The Israelites had to walk and everything they took had to be carried by them or their animals.

All night they traveled and the next day, before they dared to stop and set up their tents, and bake the dough they had brought, and rest and sleep. On the shore of the Red Sea they rested, for they believed that they were safe.

Now, they had not been gone long, when the king began to miss them badly. He had nobody to do his work. Why had he let them go? He would bring them back. So he and his soldiers got out their horses and chariots and started after them.

The Israelites were resting by the Red Sea when they heard the sound of the chariots, and saw the dust raised by the horses. What could they do? There was the water in front of them. There was no chance to get away. They were terribly frightened. They cried to Moses, "Why have you brought us here to die?"

"Do not fear," Moses said. "God will save you."

Then between the Israelites and the king and his horsemen there came a cloud, dense and black, so that they could not see each other. A strong wind blew from the east upon the waters of the Red Sea. All night it blew, till by their signal of fire the Israelites could see the mud on the bottom of the Red Sea. There was a way across! They folded up their tents. Mothers got their children together, fathers collected the animals, and into the path through the sea they crowded. There were the sounds of mooing cows and bleating sheep, the cries of babies, and the shouts of children, with the strong east wind blowing against them, as they made their way across.

Finally the cloud behind them lifted and the Egyptians saw the people whom they had come to bring back to slavery marching where once there had been a sea. They hurried after and soon they were driving their chariots through the muddy sea bottom, where wheels dragged and horses slipped. But suddenly, when the Israelites were safe on the other side, morning came and the wind blew from the west. The waters returned and covered the Egyptians and their chariots.

On the bank the Israelites sang their praise to God,—

"This is my God, and I will praise him;

My father's God, and I will exalt him."

They traveled on, but soon they had forgotten all about singing thanks, and were complaining of things that did not suit them on their journey. Once it was because the water they drank was bitter. Moses found a way to sweeten it, and led them on to a place where they could rest by twelve springs of water, and in a big grove of palm-trees.

On again they marched, and soon there were more complaints, for their food had given out.

"We wish we had died when we lived in Egypt!" they said to Moses. "Then we had bread enough. We shall starve here."

"God will feed you," Moses said. "In the evening you shall have meat, and in the morning bread."

In the evening, sure enough, a great flock of quails flew down near them, and all they had to do was to catch and kill and eat them. When morning came they found on the ground something small and round and white. They had never seen anything like it before. They all said, "Manna! What is it?" They cooked it and ate it. It tasted like honey. They called it "manna." Every day they found it. Every day they had enough to keep them from being hungry.

All went well as long as they picked up only enough for the day, as Moses told them, but some disobeyed, and any they kept overnight was spoiled by morning. So they had to gather fresh manna, just the same as the others.

I suppose you think that now these travelers were happy and contented, and thought only of how good God was, and how they could thank him. No; they soon began to complain again. They grew tired of the manna that had tasted so good at first. They wanted something different. They complained to Moses, "When we lived with the king we had fish to eat, and melons, and onions, and cucumbers. Here we have nothing but this manna." Moses even heard them crying in their tents.

They came to a place where there was no water, and they said to Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us with thirst?"

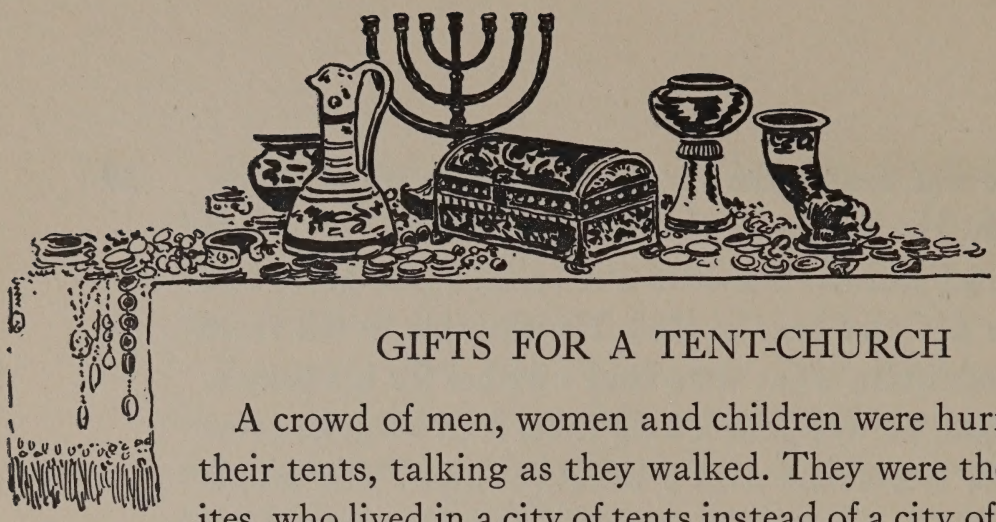
Then Moses showed them water coming from a rock.

The Israelites were pretty poor travelers. This was the first time they had ever traveled, so perhaps that was the reason.

At last they came to a high mountain. Beneath it they pitched their tents, while Moses went up on the mountain where giant rocks were piled high, where the air was clear,

where he was nearer the sky, and where he could see far and wide. He was gone a long time. Sometimes there were fearful storms. Sometimes it seemed just quiet and high. He felt very near to God. He was able to tell there on the mountain what were God's wishes for his people.

As I said, he was gone a long time. And when he came down, his face shone with a beautiful light. The people wondered. It was because he had been thinking about God up there on the mountain, and listening to him. And he came down bringing the laws that would make God's people live in peace and happiness.



GIFTS FOR A TENT-CHURCH

A crowd of men, women and children were hurrying to their tents, talking as they walked. They were the Israelites, who lived in a city of tents instead of a city of houses. They were traveling, and their tent homes could easily be folded up and carried along on camels' backs, and unfolded and set up when night fell. The trouble with a city of tents is that there are no stores or churches. Yet it was about a church that these people were so eagerly talking.

"Moses said we need a place where we can go to meet God," one man said.

"A tent for worship," said another.

"It can be taken down and folded up and carried along with us when we journey," said a third.

"We shall have to make it and furnish it out of whatever we have in our tents," said another. "There is no chance to buy anything here in this wilderness."

"Moses told us what he needed," said a man, "and

for my part I am glad that I have precious wood I can give."

"I, too, am glad for the scarlet cloth I brought with me from Egypt," said a woman.

"I have no cloth, but I have both earrings and bracelets," said another woman. "Moses said gold was needed."

"We must go without jewelry, then," said a young girl, "for where can we get more?"

"Any who grudges a gift need not make it," said an older woman. "Moses asked only the willing to give. I shall gladly give my gold brooches for the sake of a place in which to worship God."

The crowd separated, each going to his own tent. There was rummaging and hunting for treasures. Women got out wool and flax and set to spinning thread for cloth. Men dyed animals' skins red. Girls took off their jewelry.

Then began a procession to the tent of Moses, their leader. Men came staggering under heavy pieces of fine wood. Boys carried the blue and purple and scarlet pieces of cloth their mothers had found for the curtains. Earrings, bracelets, rings, jewels were piled in a glistening heap to be melted down into gold. The air grew sweet with the spices that men brought to use as incense. There

was hardly room in Moses' tent for the skins of animals to cover the tent-church, the brass and gold and silver, the oil and linen.

At last Moses said, "Bring no more! There is more than enough."

For the people had given willingly and gladly.

THE STORY OF RUTH

Ruth and Orpah were walking part way home with Naomi. Naomi was the mother of their husbands, and they loved her. She was going back to Bethlehem, her old home, that she had left long ago. Ruth and Orpah could not bear to have her go. They were lonely anyway, for their husbands were dead. So they walked along with Naomi.

By and by Naomi stopped and said, "Go back now. May God bless you!" and kissed them.

They cried and said, "No, we will return with you to your home."

"You will be happier in your own home," Naomi said.

Orpah kissed her and started back, but Ruth clung to her.

"See!" said Naomi, "Orpah has gone back. Return with her."

But Ruth answered, "Do not beg me to leave you, and to return from following after you, for where you go, I

will go; and where you live, I will live; your people shall be my people; and I will love God as you love him."

Naomi said no more. Together they traveled on till they came to Naomi's home, Bethlehem.

The people in Bethlehem were surprised to see Naomi. They wondered how she would live, with nobody to take care of her. They did not think Ruth could do anything.

But Ruth wanted to work for Naomi. The fields were full of barley ready to be cut. Reapers cut it and fastened it into bundles. Often women went after them to pick up the pieces they dropped. They called this gleaning.

Ruth said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean."

"Go, my daughter," said Naomi.

So Ruth went out in the field and gleaned after the reapers.

The name of the man who owned the field was Boaz. He came to the field and saw Ruth, the stranger.

"Who is that girl?" he asked the man who was in charge of the reapers.

He said, "It is Ruth, who came here with Naomi. She said, 'Let me glean, I beg of you, after the reapers,' so she has worked since morning."

Then Boaz came to Ruth and said, "Do not go to

another field to glean, but stay here with the girls in my field, and follow after them. If you are thirsty, drink the water that the young men have put in the water-jars."

Ruth bowed low before Boaz. "Why are you so good to me, a stranger?" she asked.

Boaz said, "I have been told how kind you are to Naomi, and how you left your home to come here with her among strangers. May God bless you!"

"You have spoken very kindly to me," said Ruth.

At lunch time Boaz said, "Come here, and eat this bread and dip it in the vinegar."

So Ruth sat beside the reapers, and she ate bread dipped in vinegar, and they gave her cooked grain to eat. She put aside some of the lunch, for she could not eat it all.

After lunch Boaz said to the reapers, "Let Ruth glean among the sheaves. Pull out some barley from the bundles and drop it, and leave it for her to pick up."

Ruth gleaned, and, because the reapers dropped some of the barley on purpose, she found so much that when evening had come, and she beat out the kernels, she had a big pile.

She took her barley back to Naomi with a happy heart. She had been able to work for her. She brought her the

barley and she brought, too, the lunch that she had saved for her.

When Naomi found that Ruth had been gleaning in the field that belonged to Boaz, she was glad, for Boaz was her relative.

The next day Ruth went into the field and gleaned, and the next, and the next. Every day while the reapers reaped Ruth worked with them, and every night she carried the barley she had gleaned and beaten out to Naomi. There was food for them both. The people of Bethlehem saw that Ruth was able to provide for Naomi.

A BOY WHO HEARD GOD SPEAK

Hannah sat watching her little boy. He was not much more than a baby, but he was growing fast. Already he could repeat the easy words she said to him over and over again. He could walk, too, very slowly, if she took his hand.

"Samuel will soon be old enough to go," Hannah thought.

Where could such a baby be going? And why did his mother watch him so closely? I will tell you.

For a long time Hannah had been very unhappy because she had no child. More than anything in the world she had wanted a little boy of her own. Then one autumn she and her husband had gone to Shiloh, where the big church called the temple was. They had gone for a week's feasting, and to give God thanks for the harvest. But Hannah could not eat with the others. She spent all her time praying in the temple. Eli, the high priest, watched her. Her lips moved, but she did not pray aloud. Often the tears ran down her cheeks. He wondered what she

was doing, and found she was praying, sometimes aloud, sometimes so that only God could hear. Her prayer was, "If you will give me a child, O God, I will give him back to you." Over and over she said it,—"If you will give me a child, O God, I will give him back to you."

God had heard her prayer, and here she was, a happy mother with a child. As she watched him, she remembered her promise, that she would give her child back to God. That meant he should learn to be a priest and serve God in the temple. When Hannah thought, "He will soon be old enough to go," she meant to the temple, to begin to learn how to serve God.

Samuel grew bigger, and stronger, and more and more able to take care of himself. He could string words together, instead of speaking each one alone. He could take steps, one after another, without thinking about each step. He was learning to feed himself. He could help put on his own clothes.

It was time now for Hannah to keep her promise, so she and the boy's father took him to Shiloh to the temple of God, to Eli, the high priest.

"Here is the child I prayed for," Hannah said. "I am giving him back to God, to work for him all his life."

She prayed and sang a song of praise to God, and then she and her husband went back to their home in the hills.

The little boy was left with Eli, the high priest. Eli would teach him, and other people would do anything for him that a little boy could not do for himself. There were houses where Eli and the other priests lived next to the temple, the big church where people met to pray.

As Samuel grew he learned how to take care of the things in the temple—the golden lamps that must be bright and clean; the great doors that must be opened. When autumn came, and the harvest was gathered, there was sure to be a visit from his father and his mother. There was sure, too, to be a new coat that his mother had made for him at home.

As Samuel grew older, and more able to help, Eli grew older and could work less. He was nearly blind, besides.

One night Eli and Samuel slept in the temple. The only light came from a golden lamp. Suddenly Samuel was wakened by a voice calling, "Samuel!"

He ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; for you called me!"

Eli said, "I did not call. Lie down again."

Samuel went back to his bed and lay down.

Again he heard a voice calling, "Samuel!"

Again Samuel got up and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; for you called me!"

Again Eli answered, "I did not call, my child. Lie down again."

And again Samuel went back and lay down.

The third time Samuel heard a voice calling, "Samuel!"

He got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; for you called me!"

Eli knew now that it must be God who was calling the child. So he said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if the voice calls again, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.' "

So Samuel went and lay down in his bed.

And the voice called as it had before, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel said, "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears."

And he listened to God as he spoke to him. Samuel knew now that he was not only Hannah's child, but the child of God.

A SHEPHERD BOY AND A GIANT

David was a shepherd boy. He took care of his father's sheep in lonely fields where bears wandered and where lions prowled. His stout stick was always ready to use against a wild animal that tried to catch his sheep. Many a time he had fought a lion with his bare hands, and choked him till he dropped the lamb he had caught, and David could strike him with his stick. Many a time he had thrown a stone with his sling and hit a lion that was creeping near, for his aim was true.

David's cheeks were red with the outdoor life. His eyes were bright and keen. His arm was strong. His heart was brave.

Now, David's brothers were soldiers who were away from home fighting for King Saul. One day David's father told him to go and visit the soldiers' camp, and find out how his brothers were, and take them a present.

You can think just how glad David was to go. He took ten loaves of bread and some grain for his brothers, and he took a present of ten cheeses for the captain.

On and on and on David went. At last he came to a hill, covered with soldiers. When he saw the soldiers he ran to get to them and find his brothers. He found them and had only begun to talk with them when suddenly the soldiers pointed to the hill opposite and shrunk back and trembled with fear. David looked. There in front was a hill covered with the soldiers of the enemy. From among them came a giant, dressed in armor of bright yellow brass. On his head was a helmet of brass. He wore a coat of brass. His legs were covered with brass. He carried a large and heavy spear. Before him went a soldier with his shield. He took great steps and then he stopped, and shouted to the soldiers across on the other hillside. David listened to what he said:

"Choose a man and let him come down to me! If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants, but if I kill him, then shall you be our servants. Give me a man, that we may fight together!"

Not a soldier of King Saul's answered him. None of them dared fight the giant. So he turned and strode back with his great steps.

David asked the soldiers questions about the giant. They told him that he was named Goliath; that every

morning and every evening for over a month he had come down from the hill and asked for a man to come and fight him; that he had said if he beat he should take them all away for servants, and they would no longer be free to do as they wished; and that no soldier dared fight the giant.

Then David the shepherd boy went to King Saul and said, "Let no one be afraid. I will fight the giant."

But King Saul said to David. "You are not able to fight this giant. You are only a boy, and he has been a soldier ever since he was a boy."

David said to King Saul, "I have taken care of my father's sheep, and when there came a lion or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, I ran after him and struck him, and took the lamb out of his mouth. If he turned on me, I caught him and struck him and killed him. I struck both the lion and the bear, and this giant shall be like one of them, because he is against the soldiers of God. God who saved me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will save me from the giant."

And King Saul said to David, "Go, and God shall be with you."

Then King Saul dressed David in his own armor. He

put a helmet of brass upon his head and he put on him his heavy coat of mail. David fastened on a sword, and he tried to walk, but he found it very hard to move.

He said to King Saul, "I cannot fight with these things. I am not used to them."

So David took off the helmet of brass, and the heavy coat of mail, and the sword. He took up his stick and he chose five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he carried. In his hand was his sling.

David drew near the giant. And the giant came on, and drew near to David. And the man who carried the giant's shield went before him.

When the giant saw David, only a boy with red cheeks and a pleasant face, and with a stick in his hand, he said, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with a stick?"

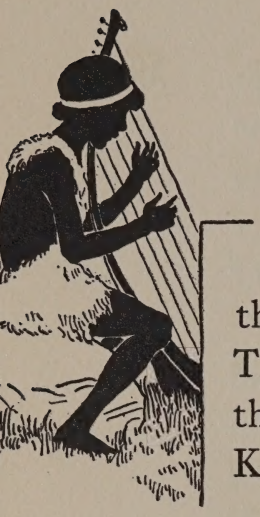
And David shouted back, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear, but I come to you in the name of God."

Then the giant drew near to meet David, and David ran to meet the giant, and the soldiers on both hills watched.

David put his hand in his bag and took out a stone.

He fitted it into his sling and threw it. Straight through the air it went and hit the giant in the forehead, and he fell. David ran over to the giant and took his sword and cut off his head. All the soldiers shouted, and ran after the soldiers of the enemy, till they had sent them far away.

King Saul and his soldiers were safe now. They would not have to be servants. Their wives and their children would not be taken away from their homes. David the shepherd boy had saved his people with the help of God.



THE STORY OF TWO FRIENDS

You remember David, the shepherd boy, who killed the giant Goliath. The soldiers were not afraid any longer. The giant could never hurt them again. David had saved them. All the soldiers thought, "How brave David is!" King Saul called David to him.

"Whose son are you?" he asked.

"My father's name is Jesse," David answered.

"Your father must let you live with me," King Saul said. "You are so brave, I want you to help me."

Now, King Saul had a son named Jonathan. He was a young man, several years older than David. Jonathan loved any one who was brave. He listened to David as he talked with King Saul. He saw how bright his eyes were, and how strong he was. He liked to look at his pleasant face. He remembered how brave he had been to kill the giant and save the soldiers.

As Jonathan watched and listened he loved David. He loved David as much as he loved himself. He heard King Saul say to David, "Your father must let you live

with me." That made Jonathan happy. Now David and he could live together and be friends.

So it happened that David lived with King Saul and his son Jonathan. David loved Jonathan, and Jonathan loved David. They promised to be true friends always.

Jonathan thought of a way to show his love. He took off the fine cloak he was wearing and gave it to David. He told his servant to bring his sword and bow and sash. Jonathan gave all these things to David. He gave him his own sash to fasten about his waist, and his own sword to fight with, and his own bow to use for shooting arrows. As the days went on David and Jonathan grew to be true friends.

King Saul made David captain of the soldiers, and he fought for the king. The soldiers were pleased, for they loved David. The people were pleased, for they loved him. David led out the soldiers to fight whenever King Saul told him to. He carried Jonathan's sword and bow with him, and so the soldiers knew that Jonathan was his friend. When he came back the women ran to meet him and sang to him. Everybody loved David. But Jonathan loved him most.

By and by there was one person who acted as if he hated

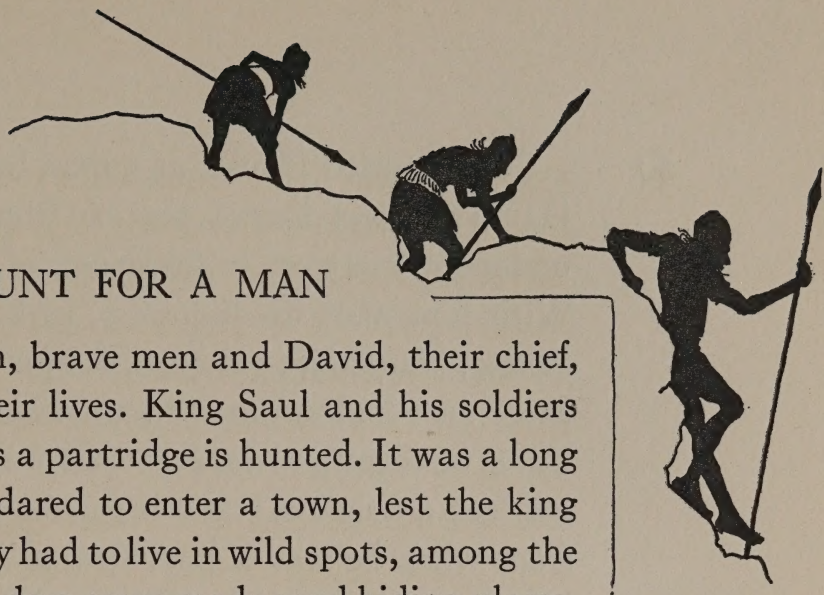
David. It was King Saul. He thought the people loved David better than they loved their king. He was cross, and sulked. At last he said to Jonathan and to all his servants, "When you have a chance, do David harm."

But Jonathan was David's true friend. He went to him and said, "Hide, for my father wants to hurt you." So David hid.

Then Jonathan said to his father, "Do not hurt David. Don't you remember how he killed the giant Goliath and saved the soldiers? Don't you remember how glad you were? Why should you want to hurt him?"

King Saul was very sorry. "I will not hurt David," he said.

Jonathan brought David in from his hiding-place and took him to his father. King Saul loved him again, and wanted him near by. He was sorry he had been angry. David played on the harp and made sweet music for the king. The king was glad to see his bright eyes and pleasant face. He loved David. But Jonathan loved him most.



A HUNT FOR A MAN

Six hundred rough, brave men and David, their chief, were in danger of their lives. King Saul and his soldiers were hunting them as a partridge is hunted. It was a long time since they had dared to enter a town, lest the king should hear of it. They had to live in wild spots, among the hills, where dark and deep caves made good hiding-places. Even here the king and his soldiers searched for them. Never for a moment were they safe.

This was the same David who had killed the fearful giant, Goliath, when all King Saul's soldiers were afraid to fight him. It was the same David who had been able to quiet the king by the spell of his music, and who had been the king's son's dearest friend. King Saul's love had turned to hate. He feared that the people might make David king in his place, and his one idea was to catch him and kill him.

"Find out the lurking-places where he hides himself," King Saul commanded his men, "and tell me, and wherever he hides, I will find him."

So he hunted David, as a man hunts a partridge, and David hid, and dodged, and ran from one cave to another, under cover of trees, in the shelter of great rocks, by night. With him went his followers, as brave as lions, and as strong. They were ready to die for their chief. Eleven of these men had swum across a wide river to get to him. Three of them had fought their way through soldiers to get him a drink of water from the well he used to drink from when he was a boy. One of them had by himself killed a lion one snowy day in a lonely spot. Strong and fearless they were, and ready to die for David, their chief, but what could even such men do against a king and his army that did not rest day or night in their hunt?

Once David barely escaped with his life. He and his followers were on a mountain, when the news came that at last the king had discovered him. Already his soldiers were climbing the mountain to get him. Quickly David and his men clambered down a great rock on the other side. Even then they might have been taken, but word came to King Saul that enemies were attacking his country. He called off his soldiers to go home and fight, and David and his men went back to the caves and hiding-places.

It was not long before King Saul and three thousand soldiers were hunting for David. They traced him to a wild, high place, where there were many caves. Saul and his soldiers marched there and made their camp. David sent out some of his followers to find exactly where the camp was. They came back and told him. David went where he could see the tents of the soldiers, and in the center, the safest place, with a wall of wagons around him, he saw the king's tent.

Then David said to two of his bravest followers, "Who will go down with me to the king's camp?"

"I will go," said Abishai.

They waited till night, and in the darkness they crept into the camp. The soldiers did not waken. Stealthily they crept past the sleeping soldiers, through the wall of wagons, to King Saul's tent. There the king lay sleeping. Near him stood a jar of water, and his spear was stuck in the ground at his head. The king was in their power.

"Let me kill him!" said Abishai, under his breath. "I can do it with one strike of my spear!"

"Do not touch him!" David whispered back. "Who shall kill the king and be innocent? When his time comes, he shall die; perhaps in battle. God forbid that I should

kill the king! But take the spear that is at his head, and the jar of water, and let us go."

So Abishai took the spear and the jar of water and they crept back, past the wagons, through the tents of sleeping soldiers. Not a man heard them or saw them. They did not stop until they had gone a great distance, and climbed to the top of a mountain.

Here David stood and cried to Abner, the captain of King Saul's soldiers.

"Abner! Abner! Abner!" David called. "Abner! Why don't you answer?"

Abner heard the call and in great wonder he cried, "Who are you that calls?"

Then David called back from the top of the mountain, "Are you not a brave man? Who can be as brave? Why have you not kept watch over the king? Some one has been in your camp ready to kill him. You are worthy of death, because you have not kept guard over the king. Look! where is the king's spear? Where is the jar of water that stood at his head?"

And David held up the jar of water and shook the spear.

As he called the king himself came out of his tent.

"Is that your voice, David, my son?" cried King Saul.

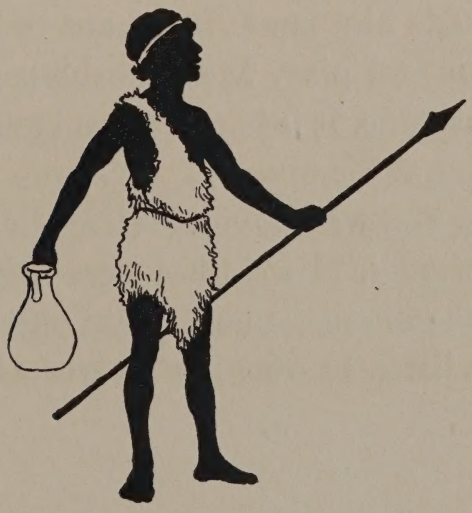
"It is my voice, O king," called David. "Why do you hunt me? What have I done? Why do you hunt me as man hunts a partridge in the mountains?"

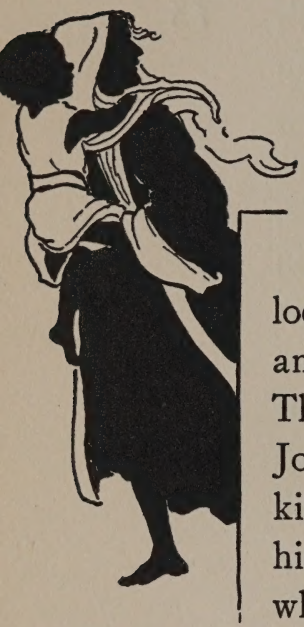
King Saul called back, "I have done wrong! Return, my son David. I will do you no more harm, because you spared my life this night. I have done wrong!"

David called back, "See! Your spear, O king! Send one of your soldiers for it. I could have killed you, but your life was precious in my sight. So may my life be precious in the sight of God! May he save me from my troubles!"

Then King Saul called back, "Blessings be on you, my son David!"

And the hunt for a man was ended.





A LAME MAN AND A KING

A woman ran with a five-year-old boy in her arms. She looked behind her fearfully. She was the little boy's nurse, and the boy was Mephibosheth, the grandson of a king, The nurse had just heard the terrible news that his father. Jonathan, and his grandfather, King Saul, had been killed in a battle. That was the reason she ran away with him; for nobody could tell what might happen to a boy who had no father or grandfather to protect him. As she ran the child fell and hurt himself terribly.

The nurse took Mephibosheth to a safe place, but his fall had made him lame. It is hard to be a lame boy who cannot run and play. Mephibosheth grew into a man. Still he was lame. It is hard to be a lame man who cannot work.

The king now was David. He lived in a palace, and wore a crown of gold. His clothes were rich and kingly. His food was the finest the land could offer. There was music for him to listen to whenever he wished. When there was

fighting to be done, David the king led his armies. How proud his people were of him when he won their battles! King David loved his people, and was ready to fight for them. He wanted them to be happy. He could not bear to have anybody in the country unhappy.

Now, a long time ago when he was a young man, David had had a dear friend Jonathan. He got to thinking about this dear friend, and wondering if he had any children alive.

He called a servant. "Find out whether any of Jonathan's family are alive," he said, "so I can show them kindness for Jonathan's sake."

The servant soon came back with news. "There is one of Jonathan's sons alive," he said. "He is a lame man. His nurse dropped him when he was a baby, and he has been lame ever since."

"Bring him to me," said the king.

Again the servant came back, and this time Mephibosheth was with him. The lame man limped in and bowed low before King David. He did not know why he had been sent for. He was afraid.

"Then you are my friend Jonathan's son?" said the king.

His voice sounded very kind. The lame man looked up. He saw a face as kind as the voice.

"I want to take care of you," said the king gently, for he knew that a man so lame could not work. "I will give you land and servants for your own. You must eat here at my table. You shall have fine clothes to wear."

The lame man could hardly believe what he heard. He was to live like a prince. He was to share in all that King David had—not in the fighting, but in the life of the palace, the rich food, the fine clothes, the good times, with music to listen to and servants to wait upon him. King David was sharing his happiness with him, a lame man.

A ROOM FOR A TRAVELER

A rich woman asked Elisha to come into her house and eat dinner. Elisha came and enjoyed it so much that he came again and again. He never passed the rich woman's house after this without stopping for a meal.

Elisha was glad of a place where he could rest and eat. He spent his time traveling from one town to another, telling people what he knew about God, and doing kindnesses. When there was sickness and trouble, Elisha was sent for. He could tell people what God wished them to do.

The rich woman knew this. She said to her husband, "This man, Elisha, who comes here so often, is a good man. He is a friend of God."

She thought much about him—this good man who was always traveling past on kind errands. What more could she do for him? It must be hard not to know where he should sleep; not to have a home of his own. This made her think of a plan. She told it to her husband.

"Let us make," she said, "a little room on the roof, and let us put in it for him a bed, and a table, and a seat, and a lamp. Then, when he comes past, he can go into this little room."

So they had the little room made on the corner of the flat roof, and in it they put the four things a traveler would need—a bed, and a table, and a seat, and a lamp. There were outside stairs that led up to the roof. It was high and cool and quiet there.

The rich woman could hardly wait for Elisha to come. Would he like it? What would he say?

At last he came. As usual, he stopped and ate dinner. She said nothing about the little room on the roof till he had finished eating. Then she took him up the outside stairs. He did not guess why. She led him across the roof to the corner. He saw the room, but he did not know it was his. She opened the room. He saw in it the four things—the bed, the table, the seat, and the lamp.

"It is for you!" the rich woman said.

Elisha could hardly believe it. He looked again at the comfortable bed. He could sleep there. He looked at the seat and the table. They were his! And there was the lamp that he could light when night came.

"What care you have taken of me!" he said.

Now as he traveled, Elisha not only had a place where he could stop and eat, but a quiet room of his very own, on a cool roof, with everything a traveler needed.

A CAPTIVE MAID

A captive maid waited upon her mistress, who was wife of the great captain Naaman. She had been taken far away from her home, but she was kindly treated and loved her mistress and worked for her faithfully. She admired her master, too, the great captain. She believed there never was so strong a man. She did not wonder the soldiers were proud to fight under him. When Naaman rode away to battle, standing straight in his two-wheeled chariot, with his horses galloping, even his wife was not prouder than the little captive maid.

But though Captain Naaman looked strong, the little maid knew that he had the beginning of a terrible disease, and that if it was not cured he could no longer lead his soldiers to battle, but would grow weak and die. Now, in her country, where she had lived before she was made captive, there was a prophet named Elisha, who often cured people as sick as her master. She longed to have her master go to him. But would he listen to a little captive maid?

One day, as she was waiting upon her mistress, she could keep silence no longer.

"Oh," she said, "if my master would only go to the prophet in my old home, he would be cured!"

And then she dropped her eyes, afraid. Would her mistress think her bold?

No; her mistress sent word to Naaman, "The little captive maid says there is a prophet in her home who can cure you!"

A few days later the little captive maid watched her master ride away in his chariot, with his prancing horses, and his soldiers riding beside him in their chariots, but not to battle—no; but to see the prophet Elisha in her country.

The days seemed long until he came back. The mistress did not watch the road more anxiously than did the little maid. She knew that the prophet Elisha was a wonderful man and a prophet of God. She believed with all her heart that he could cure her master. But the days seemed long waiting.

I think she was the first to hear the wheels of his chariot and to see the dust rising as the captain, Naaman, rode home again. Before he told, she knew he was cured, for he held his head high, and his eyes were bright, and his face

looked healthy. Then she heard how he had not seen the prophet at all, but had been sent by him to bathe in one of the rivers of the little maid's country, and how after bathing he became well.

Her master was well, and it was she, a little captive maid, who had made it possible.

BUILDING A WALL

Once upon a time the people of the city of Jerusalem were in great danger, for the wall about the city was broken down. In those days every city had a wall, to protect it from enemies who came to fight, or robbers who broke in to steal, or wild animals that prowled around. A city without a wall was not safe to live in.

Do you wonder the people of the city were fearfully frightened? Do you wonder they could not sleep or eat in peace? And yet the wall was so long—miles and miles—and so wide, and the holes so big, and the rubbish piled so high, that the people did not see how they could possibly rebuild it.

At last some men thought of going to Nehemiah for help. Nehemiah used to live in Jerusalem, but now lived in the palace of the king of another country. These men told Nehemiah about the broken wall. He felt very unhappy and begged the king to let him go and help build the wall. The king told him he could go. He gave him a letter to the keeper of the king's forest, telling him to give

him wood for new gates, and soldiers to protect him on his journey.

So Nehemiah came to Jerusalem. Nobody knew why he came. He went out by night and looked at the wall. He saw places where great stones had fallen down. He saw holes where the gates had been. He saw heaps of rubbish. Sometimes his horse could not pass, the rubbish was piled so high. All that the men had told him was true.

Next day he called together the men of the city. "Come," he said, "let us build up the wall of Jerusalem."

"Let us build," they answered joyfully.

It was a long, long wall, thick and high. But even a long wall can be built by many hands, and many hands worked on this wall. Only a few could work in one spot, so they divided up the wall among them, and the gates that had been burned.

A company of men said, "We will build the sheep gate with its bars and bolts."

Other men said, "We will build the wall next to the sheep gate."

Others said, "We will build next."

Others said, "We will build next them."

Some built a new fish gate, others a new fountain gate,

others a new horse gate, others a new valley gate.

Several men built the part of the wall next their own houses. The daughters of one man helped build.

Outside enemies laughed at them, and shouted, "Your wall will be so poorly built that a fox can break it down!"

Still the people went on building.

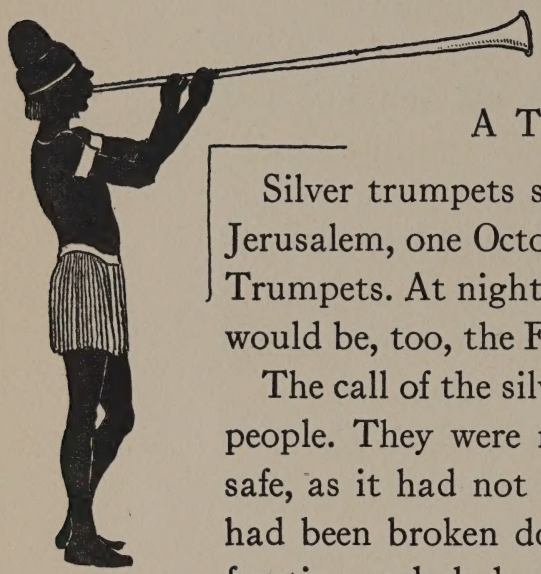
Then these enemies said, "We will come into the city and fight."

Still the people went on building, while part stood guard with swords.

Such a noise as there was—of pounding and of shouting and of big stones dropping with a thud. Everybody worked, and everybody was glad to work.

Before two months had passed the wall was done—every hole filled, all the rubbish cleared away, each gate hung and bolted. The people of Jerusalem were safe.

Nehemiah could not have done it alone. Ten men could not, or twenty, or a hundred. The wall was built because everybody helped.



A THANKSGIVING DAY

Silver trumpets sounded loud and long in the city of Jerusalem, one October day, for this was the Feast of the Trumpets. At night the new moon would show itself, so it would be, too, the Feast of the New Moon.

The call of the silver trumpets was a glad sound to the people. They were ready for a feast day. Their city was safe, as it had not been for many a year. The wall that had been broken down was built up. It was a time for feasting and gladness.

It was a time, too, for hearing God's law. In their gladness the people's thoughts turned to him, and they begged Ezra, who had studied the book of the law, to read and explain it. They made a pulpit of wood in a wide space by one of the city gates. Ezra mounted the pulpit. Beside him stood other learned men. And below, filling up the big space, were the people. It seemed as if every man and every woman in the city were there.

Ezra opened the book of the law. This was the first part of our Bible, but it was written on rolled sheets. So opening the book meant unrolling it.

The people stood up.

Ezra said, "Blessed be Jehovah, the great God!"

The people answered, "Amen! Amen!" and lifted their hands, and bowed their heads.

Then Ezra began to read. When the people could not understand the learned men about him explained exactly what was meant. It was early morning when the reading began, and noon when it ended. All the morning the people listened eagerly. And as they listened, there was a sound of sobbing. They understood now that they had not obeyed God's law.

Nehemiah,the governor, and Ezra and the teachers said, "Do not grieve and cry. This is a holy day to God. Go, eat and drink and send food to those who have none. Do not mourn, but be joyful!"

Ezra came down from his pulpit. The people went back to their homes. There was eating and drinking. There was gladness. Food was carried to those who had none. Everybody was filled with joy.

Their city was safe. They understood the law of God.

Even if they had disobeyed it in the past they would now do better.

At the close of the day that had begun with the blowing of silver trumpets the new moon came out. And there was still laughter and gladness and thanksgiving.

A BRAVE QUEEN

Once upon a time there was a girl named Esther. Esther was fair and beautiful. Every one who looked at her loved her. Esther had no father or mother, but she had a cousin Mordecai, and Mordecai loved her, so he took care of her just as if he were her father. Mordecai and Esther were Jews.

Now, the king of the land in which Mordecai and Esther lived had no queen, and he sent for all the fair girls in the kingdom, to choose one to be his queen. And Esther was brought to the palace, for, as I told you, Esther was fair and beautiful. Nobody knew she was a Jewess. Mordecai had said she must not tell.

Among all the fair girls the king thought Esther fairest, and he loved her and put the queen's crown upon her head. The king did not know she was a Jewess, for Esther obeyed Mordecai and did not tell.

One day, while Mordecai was sitting at the palace gate, he heard two men planning to kill the king, so he sent

word to Queen Esther, and the king's life was saved. What Mordecai did was written down in the big book of the kingdom, but nothing was done to thank him.

As Mordecai sat at the king's gate, the king's favorite passed by. He was a man named Haman. When Haman passed through the streets, all the people bowed down before him,—all but Mordecai. Mordecai would not bow down. Haman was very angry. He made a plan to have all the Jews killed, for he knew that Mordecai was a Jew.

So Haman went in to the king and said, "There are people in your kingdom who do not obey your laws. Let an order be made that they be killed."

The king said, "Do with these people whatever you like," and the king took off his seal ring and gave it to him. Haman had letters written and on each letter he made a mark with the king's seal ring, and that made the letter an order from the king. He gave the letters to messengers, and the messengers mounted fast horses and rode away. One messenger galloped to the east. When he drew up his horse the people gathered about him while he read the king's letter,—"On the twelfth month, the thirteenth day of the month, the Jews must be killed, young and old, little children and women."

Another messenger galloped west. When he stopped the people gathered about him, and he read the king's letter,—"On the twelfth month, the thirteenth day of the month, the Jews must be killed, young and old, little children and women."

Another messenger galloped north. When he stopped the people gathered about him while he read the king's letter,—"On the twelfth month, the thirteenth day of the month, the Jews must be killed, young and old, little children and women."

Another messenger galloped south. When he stopped the people gathered about him while he read the king's letter,—"On the twelfth month, the thirteenth day of the month, the Jews must be killed, young and old, little children and women."

The news of the king's letter came to Mordecai. Mordecai tore his clothes, and cried aloud, and dressed in coarse sackcloth, and put ashes on his head.

When Queen Esther heard of this, she sent fine clothing to Mordecai, but he would not wear it. He sent Esther a copy of the king's letter, and this message, "Ask the king to save your people." But Queen Esther sent back word, "Everybody knows that whoever shall come in

unto the king, who is not called, shall be killed, except those to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter, and I have not been called to come in to the king for thirty days."

Then Mordecai answered, "Do not think that you will escape being killed because you live in the palace. You are a Jewess. Who knows whether you were not made queen so you could save your people?"

Esther returned this answer,—"Gather together all the Jews in the city, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day, and I and my maidens will not eat or drink for three days, night or day, and I will go in unto the king, which is against the law; and if I die, I die."

So Mordecai and all the Jews did not eat or drink for three days, night or day, and Queen Esther and her maidens did not eat or drink for three days, night or day.

And then Queen Esther put on the royal dress that the king liked, and bracelets on her arms, bright and glittering, and gold chains about her neck, and on her head the queen's crown, and Queen Esther went slowly in to the king. And she stood where the king could see her.

Now the king sat on his throne of gold, in the palace.

QUEEN ESTHER DREW NEAR AND TOUCHED THE TOP OF THE SCEPTER

He looked down and saw Esther standing there. She was fair and beautiful. She pleased the king. And the king held out the golden scepter.

Queen Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter.

The king said to her, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? and what is your desire? For it shall be given you, even to the half of the kingdom."

Queen Esther said, "If it seems good unto the king, let the king and Haman come today to a dinner that I have prepared."

So the king and Haman came to the dinner that Queen Esther had made ready.

The king said at the dinner, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? and what is your desire? For it shall be given you, even to the half of the kingdom.

Queen Esther said, "Let the king and Haman come to the dinner that I shall prepare for them tomorrow, and I will ask the king then."

Haman went out full of gladness, till he saw Mordecai in the gate, and Mordecai would not bow down before him. Then he was angry, and he called together his friends and his wife. He told them how rich he was, and how he

was the only man besides the king invited to Queen Esther's dinner.

"Yet," he said, "all this does not make me happy, as long as Mordecai the Jew sits at the king's gate."

His friends told him to ask the king to have Mordecai the Jew hanged.

On that night the king could not sleep. He ordered the big book of the kingdom to be read to him and his servant read how Mordecai had saved his life.

"What was done to honor Mordecai for this?" asked the king.

"Nothing has been done."

Footsteps sounded outside. "Who is in the court?" asked the king.

"Haman," said the servant.

The king said, "Let him come in."

So Haman came in.

The king said, "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delights to honor?"

Haman thought the king meant him, so he said, "For the man whom the king delights to honor let royal clothing be brought, which the king used to wear, and the horse that the king rides upon, and the king's crown, and

let the man whom the king delights to honor be dressed in the royal clothing and ride on horseback through the streets of the city, and let it be shouted, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honor.' "

The king said, "Do this to Mordecai the Jew."

So Haman was obliged to go ahead of Mordecai, as he rode on horseback in the king's clothing, and shout, "Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delights to honor."

The king and Haman came to the second dinner Queen Esther had prepared.

The king said, "What is your wish, Queen Esther? and what is your desire? For it shall be given you, even to half of the kingdom."

Then Esther said, "Let my life be given me at my wish and my people at my desire, for I and my people are to be killed."

"Who is he and where is he that dares do so?" said the king.

"This wicked Haman," said Esther.

"Haman shall be hanged," said the angry king. And he was.

Mordecai became the king's favorite, for Esther had

told that he was her cousin. Mordecai wore the king's ring that Haman had worn.

Queen Esther begged that the king's orders might be taken back, but no order sealed with the king's ring could be changed. So the king sent other letters by men on fast horses, saying that when the Jews were attacked, they might fight for their lives.

In the twelfth month, the thirteenth day of the month, the Jews fought for their lives, and none could harm them.

The next day there was a holiday, with feasting and gladness. And since then each year this day has been kept by the Jews as a holiday.

But there would never have been a holiday, never a day of feasting and gladness, had it not been for a girl named Esther, who was fair and beautiful—and brave.

FOUR BOYS IN TRAINING

There was once upon a time a certain king who wanted boys trained up to serve in his palace. They must be good to look at, and healthy, and wise, and well taught. Among the boys were Daniel and three of his friends. Daniel and the three other boys had not always lived in this king's country. They came from a country where the people loved God. These four boys were put in charge of the king's steward.

They had to study hard. They even had to learn the language of the king's court. It was very important, too, that they should be healthy and keep good-looking. The king's steward would have charge of them three years to prepare them to serve the king in his palace.

The king sent rich food from his own table for all the boys who were in training to eat, and he sent wine for them to drink. Now Daniel knew that it would be against God's laws for him to eat the dainties from the king's table and drink the king's wine. So he decided that he would not touch the rich food, and as Daniel's three

friends always did exactly as Daniel did, they decided that they would not touch it.

Daniel went to the king's steward and said, "Do not require me and my three friends to eat the rich food from the king's table, and to drink the king's wine, which is against God's laws."

"But I fear my lord the king," answered the king's steward. "He has ordered your food and your drink. If he saw your faces worse looking than the faces of the boys of your own age, my life would be in danger."

Then Daniel said to the king's steward, "Test us, I beg of you, for ten days. Let us have only vegetables to eat, and water to drink. Then look at our faces and the faces of those that eat the king's dainties, and do according to what you see." And Daniel's three friends agreed with him in all he said.

The king's steward was willing to try this test. For ten days he let Daniel and his three friends eat only vegetables and drink only water, while the other boys who were being prepared for the king's court ate the rich food from the king's table and drank the wine he sent them.

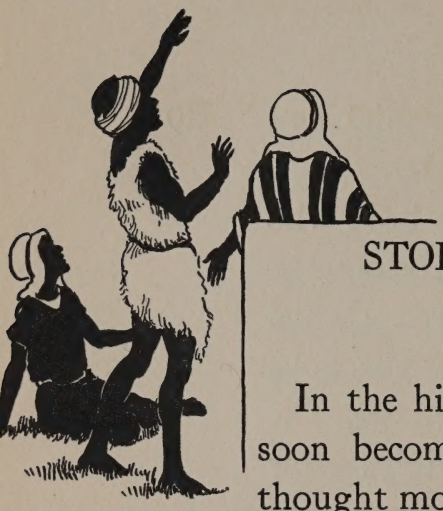
It was an anxious time for the king's steward. I think it was an anxious time for Daniel's three friends. But both

the king's steward and the three boys trusted Daniel, and believed that whatever he decided upon was wise.

At last the ten days were over, and all the boys who were in training for the king's court stood before the king's steward. He looked keenly at their faces. Daniel and his three friends were fairer of face than the boys who ate the king's dainties. They were fatter, too. The ten days' test had proved that Daniel was right. How glad his three friends were that they had followed his advice!

The king's steward no longer feared to take away the king's dainties from them. He gave them only vegetables to eat and only water to drink all the three years that they were in training.

And because they obeyed God's laws, it was easy for them to learn, and they became wise and knew a great many things. At the end of the three years the boys were brought before the king. He asked them questions, and he found that none of the wise men of his court were as wise or knew as much as Daniel and his three friends. Indeed, these boys were ten times wiser than his wisest men.



STORIES ABOUT THE LITTLE JESUS

I. THE PROMISE

In the hill-town of Nazareth lived Mary, who would soon become the wife of Joseph the carpenter. Mary thought more than she spoke. Her eyes had the still, far-away look that comes from thinking much about God. As she brought a jar of water on her shoulder from the well outside the town, or as she wove cloth for her wedding clothes, or as she sat on the roof-top resting, her thoughts were full of two things—the love of God and the Promised One who should come. For every good Jew knew that One had long been promised by their teachers who should come to make people happy and good.

It was at one of these times when Mary was thinking deeply that her eyes seemed to see a shining splendor, and her wondering ears to hear a voice say, "You, Mary, shall have a son. He shall be called the Son of God. You shall name him Jesus."

The splendor faded. She heard no more. Deep in her

heart she kept the secret, that she was to be mother of the Promised One. Once she burst into song about it,—

"For he that is mighty hath done to me great things;
And holy is his name."

II. AT BETHLEHEM

Men on the backs of swinging camels, women plodding along on donkeys, men and women on foot, crowded into the little town of Bethlehem. All day they had been arriving, by twos and threes, in answer to a royal order to come and have their names written in a book, that they might be counted. Now that night was here, the families made a great company. They filled the inns. They filled the homes of their friends. Bethlehem buzzed with the noise of talking and the cries of animals.

Among the latest comers was a man leading a donkey on which sat his tired wife. They had been passed on the road by many a hurrying rider or swift runner. They made their way to an inn, only to be told, "There is no room for you in the inn."

These weary travelers were Mary and Joseph the carpenter. They had had a long, hard journey from far-away Nazareth, and Mary was in great need of rest. What

could they do? The inn-keeper saw their need and kindly pointed out the only shelter he could offer—a cave where cows and sheep and donkeys came for food and shelter. Gratefully they went inside, and that night a wonder came to pass. A baby was born to Mary. She knew that the promise had come true. There was no nurse to care for her child, so Mary herself wrapped his soft body around and around with a long, white swaddling band. There was no bed for him, so she laid him in a manger, where animals had fed upon the hay.

III. THE SHEPHERDS

Sheep slept in the fields about Bethlehem. Sheep slept but shepherds waked, and watched for prowling lions or wolves. The wide field below the wide, star-lit sky, quiet nights and sleeping flocks were good for thoughts—high thoughts of God. And so the shepherds thought, while quietly the flock was sleeping.

Of a sudden glory shone about them. They turned their heads aside in fear. They heard a voice,—

"Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people; for there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is

Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you. Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger."

Then the sky was full of glory, and the singing of many voices,—

"Glory to God in the highest;
And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

The glory faded. The song ended. The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem. There was no sign of a new-born child in any houses there. There was no baby in the inn. They saw a light behind, in the cave. They went inside, and there they found the baby, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. They told Mary and Joseph about the glory in the sky, about the voice and the song, and Mary hid their words in her heart to think about. The shepherds returned to the field, thanking God for what they had heard and seen.

IV. IN THE TEMPLE

A week after he had been laid in the manger-bed, Mary's child was named. She remembered the long-ago

day when a voice had spoken to her, and told her to name him Jesus, so Jesus was the name given him.

Now the child was over a month old, and she and Joseph were traveling again—this time to the temple in Jerusalem. It was not a long journey, and it was a very happy one. They were taking Jesus to the great temple to ask God's blessing on him and to show that they expected him to be a child of God. All Jewish fathers and mothers took their oldest sons to the temple. They always brought a gift of birds or a lamb. Mary's gift was two pigeons. She stood inside the gate of the beautiful white temple, with her child in her arms. Joseph gave the pigeons to a priest. It was all happening as it did to any Jewish father and mother and child. And then an old priest, Simeon, came toward the little group. His face lighted up when he saw Jesus. He took him in his arms. He forgot the child and Mary and Joseph, as he prayed,—

"I am willing to die, O Lord,
Now that my eyes have seen the Promised One,
Who will bring gladness and glory."

Mary and Joseph were still wondering when a very, very old woman, Anna, came toward them. She spent her days and nights in the temple, praying and thinking

SHE STOOD INSIDE THE GATE OF THE BEAUTIFUL WHITE TEMPLE
WITH HER CHILD IN HER ARMS

about God. She did exactly as Simeon had done— thanked God for the Promised One. Then Mary and Joseph left the temple, and went back to Bethlehem with their child.

V. THE WISE-MEN

Far, far from Bethlehem, on the desert sands of the East, knelt three large camels. Beside them, on rugs spread over the sand, sat three men—Wise-men from the East. Their faces were turned toward the sky, where one by one the stars were coming out. They seemed to be waiting for something of great importance.

Finally one of the Wise-men raised his hand to the sky. The others followed his pointing finger. "The star!" they whispered. Faint at first, but each moment growing brighter and more glowing, a star appeared. So large and bright and wonderful it was, that all the other stars seemed to fade away. This was what the Wise-men had been waiting for. They quickly mounted their kneeling camels, gave them the signal to rise, and followed the star. Long they had been journeying over the sands, with the star ahead—the star that their studies had told them was the promise of a newly born king. They came

bringing presents for this king, ready to worship him.

They rode at last into Jerusalem. At the gate people gathered about them, for they showed they were men from far away. The Wise-men had an important question to ask the people.

"Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" they asked. "For we saw his star in the East, and are come to worship him."

"We have no king but Herod," the people answered.

Others came to see these Wise-men from the East, and of all they asked the same question. "Where is the newly born king of the Jews?" But nobody knew what they meant.

The news of the Wise-men and their strange question spread all over the city. It came at last to the palace, and King Herod was troubled. Surely there could be no newly born king! He, Herod, was king! He called together the high priests and scribes and asked them where the Promised One was to be born. They said, "In Bethlehem."

King Herod sent secretly for the Wise-men. When they came to the palace he asked them exactly when the star appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, and said to them, "Go and ask all about the child, and when you

have found him bring me word, that I may worship him too."

The Wise-men left the palace and the city and rode toward Bethlehem. In the city it had been hard for them to see the sky, because of the many buildings. Here on the country road the stars showed as they did in the desert. And bright and glowing and wonderful was the star they had followed. When they saw the star they were very glad. On they went and on till they came to Bethlehem. Over one of the little houses the star cast its shining rays. They gave the signal for the camels to stop. The camels knelt and the Wise-men got off. They took their treasure boxes and went inside. Should they find him—the Promised One, the King they were seeking? Yes, there was a child and a mother—Jesus and Mary. The Wise-men kneeled before him as if he were a king. Then they opened their treasure boxes and gave him gold and frankincense and myrrh, rich and fragrant, the gifts men made kings. They had found the King, the Promised One.

VI. TO EGYPT AND BACK AGAIN

Again Mary and Joseph and the child Jesus went on a journey—this time by night.

The Wise-men had not visited the palace on their way home. A dream warned them not to, and perhaps they remembered, too, the wicked face of King Herod, and told Joseph and Mary that he might mean harm to the child.

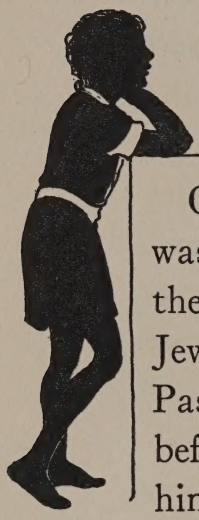
When they had gone, carefully keeping away from the king, Joseph, too, had a dream which warned him of danger. He dreamed an angel said to him, "Wake up! Take the child and his mother by night and escape to Egypt. For Herod will search for the child to kill him."

Quickly he waked Mary and the child, saddled a donkey, gathered together food and clothes, and in the dark of the night they hurried away.

In the palace a king waited for the Wise-men who never came back. When he found that he had been tricked by them the wicked king was angry, and did a terrible thing —he ordered all the baby boys of Bethlehem killed. Then he supposed that he was rid of the child who might grow up and take his place. He little knew that the child was safe and well and on his way to Egypt.

In Egypt Mary and Joseph and Jesus lived till the wicked Herod was dead, and then they came back. Joseph did not dare to go near Jerusalem, where Herod's son

ruled, but stopped at the little town of Nazareth, set like a cup among the hills. And there they made their home—Joseph, and Mary and the child, the Promised One.



A BOY'S JOURNEY

Over nineteen hundred years ago a twelve-year-old boy was looking forward to a journey. The boy was Jesus. On the last Christmas he had been twelve, and at twelve a Jewish boy was old enough to go to Jerusalem to the Passover Feast. The Passover came in the spring, but before a single bud had begun to unfold Jesus pictured himself going toward Jerusalem between fields gay with flowers.

Every spring he and his brothers and sisters had said good-bye to Mary and Joseph, as they started on this journey. How often he had climbed the hill behind Nazareth to watch the little company of travelers till they looked like mere specks far away! This year he should not watch. He should be one of that company. He should be seeing what lay beyond the farthest hill. He should be joining in the songs. Already, at the synagogue school and at home he had learned some of the Psalms they would sing. He knew, too, the place where he should first see the

great church, the temple, which would look like a mountain of snow.

I can almost hear the questions he asked of his mother, as she ground meal, or baked meal cakes, or set out the honey for supper. I can see him helping Joseph at his carpenter's bench outdoors, on a sunny day, and asking how different the houses in Jerusalem were from the small white house in which they lived. I can see him looking up at the stars, he and his brothers lying on the flat roof wrapped in blankets, and thinking that the same stars would shine on him in the great city. I can see him following his mother to the well outside the town, and listening to stories of Jerusalem as she walked back with her full water-jar on her head. I can see him every week in the synagogue—the small church of Nazareth—wondering how much bigger the temple in the city would be. I can see him and the other village boys crowd around the story-tellers who stopped at Nazareth and told stories of David and Saul, of Samson and Moses, and the great things that had happened in the city and on the hills between. Every day the time drew nearer. Each night made one less to wait.

At last the spring came, and one day the fathers and

mothers and boys of Nazareth started on the journey to Jerusalem. It was exactly as Jesus had dreamed. They walked between green fields where flowers blossomed. Birds sang. Looking back, Jesus could see the village boys watching from the hill, just as he used to watch. Some one started a Psalm, and all the company joined in singing,—

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains;
From whence shall my help come?
My help cometh from the Lord,
Who made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved,
He that keepeth thee will not slumber,
Behold, he that keepeth Israel
Will neither slumber nor sleep."

Looking ahead, Jesus saw other groups of people coming along roads that would turn into the one he traveled. Looking back, the boys of Nazareth seemed like dots. He heard singing,—

"The Lord is thy keeper;
The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night."

The singers came in sight. Some rode on camels. Some rode on donkeys. Many walked. The two groups met at the cross-roads, and a chorus of voices sang,—

"The Lord will keep thee from all evil;
He will keep thy soul.
The Lord will keep thy going out and thy coming in
From this time forth and forevermore."

Relatives greeted each other. The boys in this new company got acquainted with those from Nazareth. Other groups joined these. They ate by the wayside. By night they had come to the River Jordan, and there they set up the tents they had carried or rolled themselves in blankets and slept. And the Psalm rang in Jesus' ears,—

"He that keepeth thee will not slumber,
Behold, he that keepeth Israel
Will neither slumber nor sleep."

The next day, as they traveled south by the river, the roads grew more crowded, as more people joined them. It was a mighty chorus that sang,—

"The Lord is my keeper."

At night the moon was bright when they stopped for food and sleep. They were up early, pushing on, but

none too early for the twelve-year-old boy. The last night on the road he wished was half as long.

Morning came, and they walked more slowly, for the road was narrow and steep, winding between high rocks. Ahead they could see the mountains, and they sang again,—

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains."

And suddenly they saw the great city, and high in the center, like a snow-covered hill, was the temple, glittering when the sun touched the gold with which it was decorated. Jesus' dream was indeed coming true, and I can hear his boyish voice ringing out, clear and joyful with the others, as they sang,—

"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet are standing
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem."

Before the day closed they were in the city. Jesus had never seen so many houses. Merchants called out to the dusty and tired travelers to buy food. Clothing was shown for sale. These things were interesting to a country boy, but most interesting of all to Jesus was the temple. It was even more wonderful near than far away, so

large, made of white marble and dazzling gold, with white-robed priests chanting Psalms, while crowds of people bowed in prayer; with fathers of families bringing lambs which the priests killed, and gave them to roast and eat at home; with groups of wise men talking and teaching in the marble porches; with an altar where a fire always burned; with a holy place where only the priests went. This splendid temple, with its many great rooms, was very different from the little synagogue at Nazareth.

Joseph bought a lamb, a priest killed it and he and Mary and Jesus went to a relative's home where it was roasted. That evening they ate the Passover Feast. All over the city people were eating the same things—roasted lamb and herbs and flat cakes made without yeast. At every feast the youngest boy asked, as Jesus asked, "What is the meaning of the feast?" and the story was told of the first Passover Feast eaten long years ago, when the Israelites were hurrying away from Egypt. Again they all sang from the Psalm,—

"Oh, give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good!"

The days in the city were busy days, visiting, and seeing the city sights, and going again and again to the temple. It was over all too quickly, and the little company of

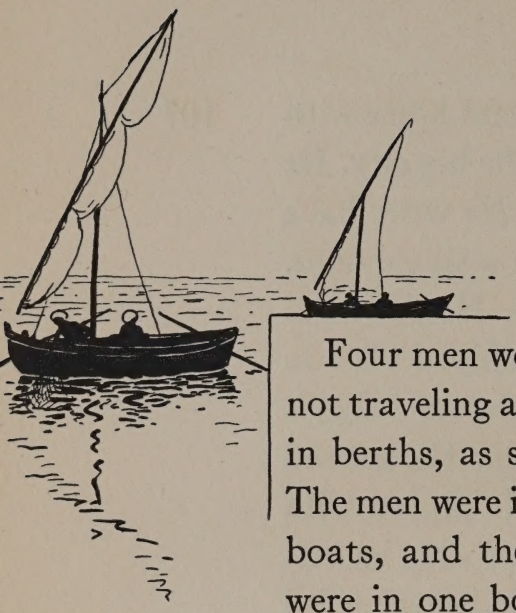
people from Nazareth got together and started on the journey home. Along that same narrow, rocky road they went, looking back every now and then to the temple, like a snow-covered hill, touched with gold—all but Jesus. He did not look back, for Jesus *was not there!* Joseph and Mary had traveled some time before they missed him, for often he would be with the other boys, ahead or behind, as they traveled. They asked all their friends and relatives if they had seen him. None of them had. Joseph and Mary hurried back to the city. Here they hunted for him—in the streets, at the house where they had eaten the Passover Feast. They could not find him. They were very much worried. At last they went to the temple, and there they found him, in one of the porches, where the wise men were teaching. Yes; there he was, listening and learning and answering questions. The teachers wondered at the answers he gave, and at his wonderful thoughts about God.

Joseph and Mary were astonished and Mary cried out, "My child, why did you treat us like this? Your father and I have been looking for you and have been very anxious."

Jesus was as much surprised as they. "Why did you look for me anywhere else than here?" he said. "Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?"

"DIDN'T YOU KNOW THAT I MUST BE IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE?"

Of course he left the temple at once and went home with them. His journey was over. He had seen the big city. He had worshiped his Father in the temple. He went back to Nazareth, to the little white house with a single door. He helped Joseph at his carpenter's bench. He did what Mary told him to do. Every week he worshiped God in the little synagogue. He listened at night to Mary's stories of Daniel and Joseph and Abraham. He learned the secrets of the flowers and the birds. He played with the children of Nazareth. And whatever he did, he was thinking great thoughts about his Father in heaven. God loved him. Mary and Joseph loved him. Everybody, old and young, rich and poor, in the town of Nazareth, loved the boy Jesus.



A NIGHT OF FISHING

Four men were spending the night on a lake. They were not traveling across it to get to the other side, and sleeping in berths, as some of you have done in big steamships. The men were in two small, open boats. They were fishing-boats, and these men were fishermen. John and James were in one boat. Peter and Andrew were in the other. While other people slept these fishermen worked, for the night was the best time to fish.

It was quiet and dark. The only sound was the dip of the oars, and the swish of the boat through the water. The only light came from the stars overhead. The men fished with nets, which they threw overboard and pulled in, filled with fishes, that is, the nets were usually full, but this night they came up empty. The fishermen rowed from one spot to another, hoping for better luck, but not a single fish was caught. It was dreary work, rowing, and stopping, and casting the nets, and pulling them in empty, rowing to another spot, and stopping, and cast-

ing the nets, and pulling them in empty, over and over, all night long. It was dreary fishing.

The night ended and the tired fishermen rowed slowly to shore. They left their boats on the beach, and began to wash their nets. Now, the beach was not empty. A crowd of people were gathered there, as if something of importance was happening. In their center was a man talking. It was Jesus, a man now and a wonderful preacher. He was telling the people about the good way of living. More people came and more. They pressed close against Jesus. So eager were they to hear him, so anxious not to miss a word, that they crowded closer and closer. Jesus looked about and saw the empty boats, and the fishermen washing their nets. He stepped into Peter's boat.

"Put out a little from the shore," he said to Peter.

Peter got into the boat and rowed out a little way. Jesus sat down and preached to the people on the beach. The boat was like a pulpit. It was easier to preach here, where the people could not press so close.

At last Jesus stopped talking, and the people left the beach. Then he turned to Peter.

"Push out to the deep water and let down your nets," he said.

Peter answered, "Master, we worked all night and caught nothing; but because you tell me to, I will let down the nets again."

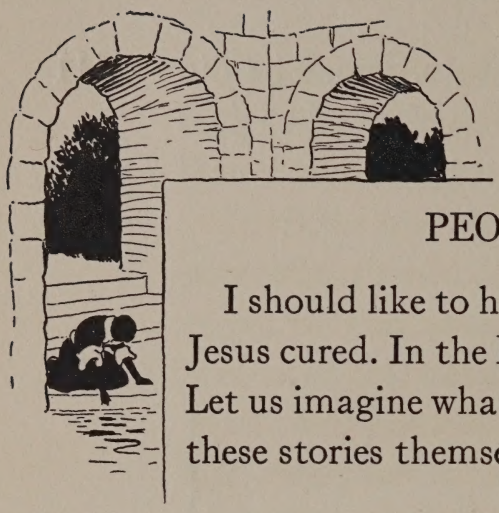
So Peter and Andrew put their nets in the boat and started out again to the deep water where Jesus told them to go. On and on they rowed, while their partners washed their nets on shore. They reached the deep part of the lake. They threw over their nets. They tried to raise them. They were full of fishes—so full they were breaking. Peter and Andrew beckoned to their partners. James and John got into their boat and rowed quickly to them, and together they pulled in enough fishes to fill both boats.

Peter wondered at Jesus. So did Andrew and James and John. How had he known about the many fishes, when all night they had not caught one? Peter kneeled down in the boat before him. Jesus looked at him.

"After this you shall spend your time helping men to be like God," he said.

They rowed back. They took out the fishes. They handed over their nets to the father of James and John. They left their boats for him to use. They had decided not to be fishermen any longer, but to follow Jesus, and

help him. Where he went they would go. What he did they would do. They could not spend their time just fishing any more. They would help Jesus as he showed people the good way of living.



PEOPLE JESUS CURED

I should like to have heard the stories of the sick people Jesus cured. In the Bible we read what happened to them. Let us imagine what they would have said if they had told these stories themselves.

I. THE STORY OF THE MAN AT THE POOL

I had never felt so friendless and alone as that day I first saw Jesus. I think it was because there were so many people about. They had come to Jerusalem because of one of the feasts, and many of them stopped at the pool by the sheepgate where I lay. Nobody spoke to me, and a man always feels lonely in a crowd where no one notices him.

I lay on my mat, where for thirty-eight years I had lain. It seemed forever. I could hardly remember the time when I could move. I felt more like other men there at the pool than anywhere else, for all about, on the porch, under the arches, lay sick people on mats like mine. Lame men sat

near the water with their sticks beside them, and the blind stared straight ahead without seeing.

These sick people had not come to be company for each other. Oh, no! We were there beside the pool of water hoping to be cured. It was a strange pool. Most of the time it was like glass, but once in a while the spring that fed it bubbled up. People said that the sick person who stepped into the pool first after the bubbling would be cured. That is why we came—the blind feeling their way, and the helpless ones carried by their friends. Often these friends stayed, to lift their sick ones into the water. I had to get somebody to carry me to the pool, but I had no friend who wanted me cured enough to stay. And so I never got into the water first. I could hardly get there at all, it was so hard for me to move.

Now, the day I am telling you about we lay as usual, waiting and watching the pool. No one dared take his eyes off the water, for fear it would bubble before he noticed it, except the blind ones, and they listened for the bubbling. The crowd of people who stopped to look curiously at us, or passed by without a glance, as I said, made me feel lonely and friendless. Besides, I had about given up hope of ever getting into the pool first.

Then suddenly a stranger stopped by me.

"How long have you been sick?" he asked.

I took my eyes off the pool to look at him and answer wearily, "Thirty-eight years." Something about the man made me forget to turn back to the water.

"Do you want to get well?" he asked.

I told him, "I have nobody to put me into the pool when the water bubbles, and while I am getting down—for I move very slowly—some one steps in ahead of me."

"Get up!" said the stranger. "Pick up your mat, and walk!"

And I did—I could! I, who had not walked for thirty-eight years, went away from that pool, with my mat under my arm, walking like other men.

Some stupid men, who had always walked, I suppose, met me and said, "It is the sabbath, and it is against the law for you to be carrying your mat."

I answered, "The man who made me well said, 'Pick up your mat, and walk!' "

They asked me, "Who is the man that said to you, 'Pick up your mat, and walk'? "

I looked about. The stranger had disappeared. "I do not know," I said. Then I walked on, as other men walked.

I had reached the temple, when I saw again the stranger who had cured me.

He came up to me as if he had something very important to say.

"You are cured," he said.

I took a step or two to prove to him and to myself that I was. Then he gave me a look that seemed to go through my body into my heart.

"Do no more wrong," he said, "or something worse may happen to you."

I asked people who the stranger was. They told me he was Jesus.

II. THE LEPER'S STORY

I was once a leper. That meant that my dreadful disease kept me away from everybody except lepers. I had to leave my family and my friends, and live with lepers. I could not go near anybody without crying, "Unclean! Unclean!" so they would be careful not to touch me. We lepers wore clothes that were torn and no covering on our heads, so that all who saw us would know we were lepers. I used to think I should be willing to suffer any kind of pain if only I could be with my friends. Can you think of

anything harder than to see people you love come toward you and have to cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" and watch them stop and turn back?

The happiest day of my life I and nine other lepers were coming out of a village. I had no idea then that this would be the happiest day of my life. It seemed just like the other dreary days, when we saw some people coming toward us, and we stopped and cried out, as we always must, "Unclean! Unclean!" But a leper noticed that Jesus was one of the travelers. He told us. We knew the stories of Jesus' cures. We knew of a leper he had made well. We had been waiting and longing to see him. Even now we did not dare go one step nearer. We just stood where we were and cried out loudly, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

He did not touch us. He did not come near. He just said to us, "Go, and show yourselves to the priests," as if we were already cured. For cured lepers could not go near other people till the priests had said that they were truly well.

We were not cured, but we started for the city as Jesus told us. We never once thought of asking questions or waiting. And on the way there we felt ourselves grow well. I felt it, and looked at the others. They, too, were cured.

I stopped there in the road. The other nine men kept straight on toward the city. I could not go on till I had thanked Jesus. All the way I praised God at the top of my voice. I could not help it. I was well. I could go back to my friends. I could touch those I loved. Instead of crying, "Unclean! Unclean!" I cried out my thanks to God.

When I reached Jesus I threw myself at his feet and thanked him.

He said, "Were there not ten cured? Where are the other nine? Were you, who are a foreigner, the only one to come back and give thanks to God? Get up and go. It was because you believed that you could be cured."

I felt ashamed of the others, who, as Jesus said, were men of his own country, but I was too happy to think much about them. On my way back to my home I thanked God and thought about Jesus, who had made this the happiest day of my life.

III. THE STORY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND

One sabbath day I sat in a street of Jerusalem listening to footsteps. All my life I had listened instead of looking, for all my life I had been blind. I had learned to listen very

carefully. When I was a child I could tell whether my father was coming or my mother. I could tell when a train of camels was passing through the streets, as well as any boy who could see. I was often the first to reach a safe place when a band of soldiers marched through Jerusalem. Now that I was a man I could almost tell the number of a crowd from the sound of the footsteps.

As I listened, the footsteps stopped. I knew that a small group of men was near me. They might be stopping to put money in my hand, as men often did, but I heard no clink of gold. Instead they were talking, and about me. Though they spoke low, I, who had practised listening all my life, could easily hear what they were saying. They were asking questions of one of their number about what caused my blindness. This one was Jesus. They called him Master. I had heard the stories about Jesus, his teaching, his cures, and the twelve men who traveled everywhere with him. I knew that it was these men who were now asking Jesus about me. Probably they were here in the city for the feast, as so many people were.

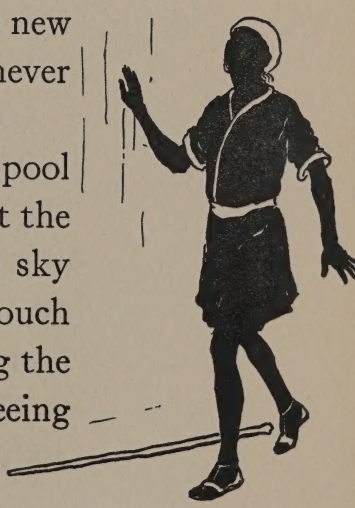
I could not understand his answer, but I did hear him say, "I am the light of the world." Being blind, that word "light" struck me. Then I felt wet earth on my eyes, and I

heard his voice saying, "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam."

I turned and went. You may wonder why I did not question him about what good it could possibly do to a man born blind to wash in one of the city pools. You would not wonder if you had heard him say, "Go." You would have turned and gone, as I went.

I had no trouble in finding the Pool of Siloam. I could find my way by feeling of the houses and the city walls just as other people do by seeing. When I reached the pool outside the wall, I stepped down into the water and washed my eyes and came up. I could see. For the first time in my life I could see.

I cannot tell what I looked at first. It seemed like a new world. I had listened to it. I had touched it. I had never before looked at it.



Slowly I found my way back to the city. I left the pool I had seen for the first time. I stopped to look back at the green grass in the fields, and the gay flowers. The sky was a wonder. A man cannot listen to the sky nor touch it. I had to find my way back into the city by touching the wall and the houses just as I had always done, for seeing was new to me.

As I made my way back I met neighbors and friends who stopped and stared at me. I had no idea who they were till they spoke. Their faces were strange to me, but their voices I knew.

"Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?" one asked.

Some said, "Yes! It is he."

Others said, "It can't be. This man only looks like him."

Then I cried out, "I am the man!"

They said to me, "How is it that you can see?"

I told them, "The man who is called Jesus rubbed wet earth on my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash them!' So I went and washed and then I could see."

"Where is he?" they said.

I answered, "I do not know."

They took me to some of the important men of the church, and I told the same story. These men, who had always been able to see, thought more about its being the sabbath when Jesus took away my blindness than that I had received my sight.

They would not even believe that I had been blind, so they called my father and my mother and said to them,

"Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How is it he can now see?"

My father and mother said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how it is he can see now, we do not know. We do not know who has made him see. He is a man. Ask him."

Then the men made me tell the whole story over again, and tried to make me believe that Jesus was not good. I grew very angry. I told them again and again and again, "I was blind. Now I can see. Nobody but a good man could have done this." They ended by saying that I could not come into the churches.

Then Jesus came to me. When he had heard that I had been put out of the churches he had looked for me.

"Do you believe in me?" he said.

I looked at him and then I kneeled down before him. I knew Jesus, who had made me see, was the friend of God and the friend of men.

IV. THE STORY OF THE HELPLESS MAN

I shall never forget the day my four friends came to me, crying, "Jesus has come back!" That was great news,

for the whole town of Capernaum had been talking about him.

I was a helpless man. All night and all day I lay in one position, and could not move hand or foot. Yet the news of Jesus had come to me as I lay on my bed, or was lifted on a mat to be carried about. I knew how he preached in the synagogue, the church of the town. I knew how he cured sick people. I had heard about the son of a nobleman in my town who was dying, and how his father traveled to Cana to get Jesus to help him, and how Jesus told him his son would live, and on his return he found him growing well. I had been told of the soldier in Capernaum whose servant was helpless, as I was, and whom Jesus cured. These things would make any sick man wonder, wouldn't they?

I had heard about the men who traveled with him and who loved him and tried to be like him. I had heard of his teaching about how to be good. This made me think, too. I had not been good. I longed to be. More even than being well, I wanted to be good. When you lie helpless, day after day, year after year, you have time to think. I had to remember about being bad, when how gladly I would have remembered about being good!

So when my friends came in crying, "Jesus has come back!" I was very much excited, for it might be I could see him. My friends knew how sorry I had been when Jesus had gone on a preaching journey, and that was the reason they had hurried to me with the news.

They lifted me on a mat which they could carry easily. Each of the four took a corner, and soon I was on the street, being carried to the house in which Jesus was preaching. Our journey seemed to be of no use, for the crowd filled the house and stretched out through the door into the street. A man on a mat had no chance to get near the Great Teacher.

My friends did not give up. They laid me gently down and talked together, and then came back and picked me up. "We are going to take you up on the roof," they said.

The roofs of all our Capernaum houses are flat and there are outside stairs leading to them. They carried me, still on my mat, up these stairs, and laid me on the roof. Then they began digging a hole through the roof, and I understood their plan. I was to be let down through the hole to get to Jesus. I lay there, not able to do one thing to help, wondering whether my friends could make a hole large enough, and what the people in the house would

think to see a man on a mat let down among them. Then I wondered about Jesus—how he would look, what he would say, and as I thought about him, I felt dreadfully unhappy. I would have given anything in the world if I had always been good. I knew he would know I had not.

And he did know. I do not remember how long it took my friends to make the hole, or about being let down. As for the people, I hardly noticed them. I only remember it was very still, and there I was lying on my mat and looking up into Jesus' face. It was then I knew that he knew I was unhappy because I had not been good. "Courage!" he said. "Your sins are forgiven." And suddenly my dreadful unhappiness was gone!

I remember the important men of the church seemed very much shocked at this and spoke to each other about it, and he answered them. The next thing I knew he had turned to me and was looking at me. "Get up!" he said. "Pick up your mat, and go home!"

I did get up, I who had lain helpless night and day. I did get up, and rolled up my mat, and rushed through the crowd, home. Even now I do not remember how the people looked as they let me pass through or what they said. I was well. I could move. I need not spend the nights

and the days being unhappy. God knew I was sorry and had forgiven me. Jesus had told me so.

V. THE STORY OF A STRANGER

I want to tell about the most beautiful sight I ever saw. I had come to the town of Capernaum just as the sun had set. Instead of the rest there usually comes with sunset, the whole town was full of excitement and sick people. I never saw so many sick people on the streets. There were lame men walking with the help of sticks. There were blind ones led by friends. There were helpless men carried on mats. There were sick children in their mothers' arms. They were all going one way. I followed curiously. There outside a house the sick people were gathering. They lay on their mats near the door. The street was filled with them, and still more came. I stepped aside once to let a crazy man pass who was led along by his keeper.

Stepping nearer I saw a man moving among the sick. He would touch one, say a word to another, ask another a question. And everywhere he passed health followed. I saw sticks dropped, and mats rolled up by men who had been lying on them, and children who had been carried happily skipping. I even saw the crazy man I had

moved away from, come back gentle and like other men. I saw a whole band of men, sober and calm, who people told me had come wild and shrieking.

Then darkness fell, the man went inside the house, and the street was empty. I asked who he was. I was told he was Jesus. I was told that in the house was a woman waiting upon him and his friends who that very morning had been sick with a fever, and whom he had cured. I was told how he had made a man sane who had made a dreadful disturbance in the church that morning. I was told how at the service he had preached and people had wondered at his preaching.

I shall never forget that evening in Capernaum, when the sky was red with the sunset. I did not get near enough to see the face of the Man who changed sorrow and suffering and wildness to happiness. It was enough to see the glow on the faces of the people as they left him.

A TRAVELING SCHOOL

Twelve men were always found with Jesus. He called them apostles. That meant messengers. They were to learn all they could from him about the good way of living, so they could tell this to other people. As they walked along the dusty roads, they were like a little traveling school—Jesus the Teacher and twelve pupils. Some of the lessons he taught by stories; some of them by sermons, preached outdoors, as they sat on the green grass around him. But they learned most about the good way of living by watching him.

These twelve men had to leave their homes and their business in order to live with Jesus. They were glad to. They would rather be with him than anything else in the world. There were five fishermen, Peter and Andrew, who were brothers, James and John, two more brothers, and Philip. There was Matthew the tax-collector. We do not know the other men's business, which they left at the call of Jesus, but we do know their names—Bartholo-

mew, Thomas, another James, Simon, Judas and Judas Iscariot.

When Jesus cured sick people these friends of his were near by, watching. When learned men asked him hard questions these pupils of his listened to their Teacher's wise answers. Whether he preached in the synagogues, or sitting on the side of a mountain, or with a boat for a pulpit, the apostles were among the listeners. They traveled up to Jerusalem with him, to the feasts in the beautiful temple. They sailed over the blue Lake of Galilee with him when he was tired, to find a place to rest. One of them carried the bag of money for them all—Judas Iscariot. Probably it was Philip who attended to getting food. When they came into a town one of them looked out for places for them all to sleep. A traveling school, with most of the lessons outdoors—I like to think of it.

Now, as I told you, the lessons were all about the good way of living. They heard Jesus talk about it. They saw how Jesus lived. Little by little they found out his secret. The good way of living came from keeping close to God.

They were talking about it, and one of them said,

"Don't you remember that time Jesus spent the whole night on the mountain praying?"

"And that morning," Peter said, "when we looked everywhere for him. Don't you remember? It was the morning after he had cured my wife's mother of a fever, and after sunset all the sick of the town were brought to him. In the morning the people were at the house asking for him. You remember that he was not in the house, and how we went out at last and found him in a lonely spot praying. You remember he said he had been there since a long while before daylight. How strong he looked! And he seemed to understand just what he must do—that other cities besides Capernaum must hear his teaching, and so we traveled on."

They had begun to find out Jesus' secret. They came to him and said, "Master, teach us to pray."

He taught them to pray. He told them a new name for God—"Our Father." He told them that the Father, who cannot be seen, will hear when his children speak. He took them out in the fields and showed them a wild lily, its loveliness made by the Father. He pointed to birds flying through the air and he said, "Your heavenly Father feedeth them." He said, "The Father cares more for you

than for the birds and flowers." And so they learned to pray.

Now there were more towns than one man could visit, and more sick people than one man could cure, and more who needed teaching than one man could teach. So, after Jesus' twelve friends had learned some of his lessons, he called them to him and sent them out, to be his messengers. He sent them out to teach the good way of living, and the secret of it—keeping close to the Father. For a while the school of twelve pupils and a teacher broke up, and the apostles went two by two, along different roads, to different towns to be teachers themselves.

I like to think of them as they came to a town, finding a family that would entertain them, curing the sick, giving a child a cup of cold water, bringing crazy people to their right minds, comforting unhappy people and teaching the secret of the good way of living, that is, to keep close to the Father. I like to think of them as they came back and told their adventures to Jesus. I can almost see his face as he listened to those pupils of his who were learning to teach.

STILLING THE TEMPEST

One day a man preached in a strange pulpit. The pulpit was a boat, and the preacher was Jesus. At first he had preached on the shore, but the people had pressed so close that he had stepped into one of the boats that belonged to his fishermen friends, and they had pushed it out a little way from the shore, and there he sat, preaching from a boat.

After a time the preaching was finished.

"Let us go over to the other side of the lake," he said.

His friends raised the sail. The gentle wind that was blowing filled it, and the boat moved slowly on. Jesus was tired, and as he rested there in the stern of the boat, he fell asleep, his head on the wooden cushion.

Jesus and his friends were not the only ones sailing on the lake. From the shore other small boats put out, to cross over. And one by one, these little boats raised their sails, and moved gently on.

When the boats were well out on the water, the wind suddenly changed, and swooped down upon the lake

with a roar. It caught the sail of the boat in which Jesus slept, and pushed it rapidly along, cutting through the water like a race-horse.

It lashed the water into great waves which rocked the boat, and beat upon it, and splashed over into it, wetting Jesus' friends and half filling the boat. They hurriedly pulled down the sail. They bailed the water out of the boat, but they could not bail it out as fast as it poured in. It was dark, for scudding clouds covered the sky. The whole lake, before so calm, was a mass of high waves. The boats, which had started out so slowly, were swept along by the wind, up the waves, like hills, and down again into the hollows.

During this tempest, Jesus still slept. The rocking boat and the sweeping wind did not waken him. He did not feel the water that dashed over him.

Jesus' friends grew afraid. They had done all they could; still the water poured in. How could Jesus sleep through it? Yet there he lay, in the stern of the boat, asleep.

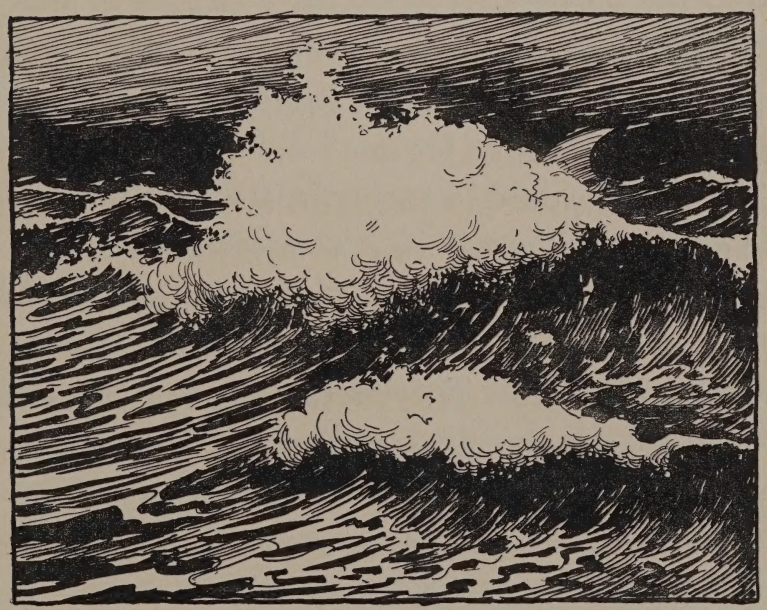
They touched him, and woke him, crying, "Master, don't you care if we drown?"

Jesus felt the wind blowing against him, and the wet of the waves dashing in, and the rocking of the boat. He

saw the black clouds in the sky above, and the other boats swept along by the mighty wind. And close to him were the frightened faces of his friends, crying, "Don't you care if we drown?"

Then Jesus spoke sternly to the wind. It stopped blowing. He said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" The wild dashing ceased, and the whole sea grew calm.

Jesus looked at his friends. "Why are you afraid?" he said. "Can't you trust me?"



CHILDREN WHO KNEW JESUS

I wish I could have seen all the children who knew Jesus, don't you? I can almost hear them telling about him. These are their stories, as I imagine them:

I. THE STORY OF THE BOY WITH A LUNCH

I started out one day with my lunch. My mother put it up for me. It was five barley loaves and two dried fishes. There was just enough for me. I did not dream how many besides myself would be eating it. It seemed like any day. I did not know it would be a wonderful day.

As I walked along, I turned toward the lake. Usually it was a quiet place, but this day there were a great many people on the shore. They were all going one way—not toward the town, but toward the mountain. They seemed in a hurry. As I watched them I noticed they kept pointing to a boat out on the water, sailing from the town. They seemed excited and happy.

After a while I went up to one of the boys. There were boys and girls as well as men and women.

"Where are you all going?" I asked.

He pointed to the boat and did not stop as he said, "Wherever he lands."

"Who?" I asked, while I walked along beside him.

"Jesus," he answered.

"Who is Jesus?" I asked.

"Don't you know about Jesus?" he answered, and as a great cry went up, "He is nearing the shore!" the boy broke into a run, and I was left behind without an answer.

As soon as I had caught my breath I joined the crowd. It was growing bigger every minute. I hurried on with the rest.

I was one of the last to get to the landing-place, and by this time the boat was standing empty on the beach, and the people were gathered at the foot of the mountain, about a man. I knew this must be Jesus. He seemed to be talking, but I was not near enough to hear what he said. I thought he did something to help sick people, for every now and then a person who looked sick was carried to him. What he did I could not see, for the crowd was great.

It grew late. I thought of my lunch, and was very

hungry. Just as I was wondering whether I could make my way out of the crowd and eat it, a man pushed through, asking, "Has anybody any food? Food is needed."

"I have food," I said; "five barley loaves and two dried fishes."

"Five barley loaves and two dried fishes?" the man repeated. "What are these among so many? But come, bring them to Jesus."

I followed him, wondering and excited. I was to see this Jesus, whom the great crowd had come out to meet. He needed my lunch.

Andrew, as I heard some one call the man who led me, seemed to be an important person. The people let us pass. We came to a little group of men gathered about a man whose back was toward us. They acted as if they were in trouble.

I heard one of them say, "Send the people away, so that they may go and buy themselves something to eat."

Then I heard Jesus say, "They need not go away. You give them food."

I knew as soon as he spoke that it was Jesus. I had never heard such a voice. I understood now why the crowd had gone to meet him.

I KNEW WHEN HE LOOKED AT ME THAT IT
WOULD BE ENOUGH

Then I heard Andrew telling him, "Here is a boy who has five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are they among so many?" and I was pushed forward.

How proud and yet how ashamed I felt! The only one who had food, and such a little! For it seemed Jesus did not want it for himself, but to feed these people.

Then he turned and looked at me. "Bring them here to me," he said, and I gave him my lunch. I knew when he looked at me that it would be enough.

I was so busy watching him that I did not know the order had been given to be seated till I looked about and saw the people sitting in squares, with paths running between them, on the mountainside. No one spoke. They were all looking at him and twelve men stood near him. One of the men was Andrew. I quickly found a place in one of the squares.

Then Jesus prayed as he held up my lunch. He prayed to God and called him his Father and thanked him for my lunch. I had never thought of doing that. He gave it to the twelve men and they passed it among the people. I felt none of the shame I had felt at first because there was so little, for as I watched Jesus, I knew it did not matter. I was sure there was enough. And there was enough. I

ate all I wanted, and so did the people around me. Once I stood up so I could see them all, and there was not a person there who was not eating.

After the people had eaten, they went home, a few at a time. They walked more slowly than they had in coming. Everybody seemed satisfied. There was a shining, happy look on their faces. I noticed it on the face of the boy I had asked about the crowd. He remembered me.

"You know *now* who Jesus is," he said.

"I know now," I said, and we walked together without another word till I turned off to my home.

II. THE STORY OF THE NOBLEMAN'S SON

Once I was very, very sick. I remember how hot I felt and how I tried to find a cool spot in the bed, when no spot could stay cool, touched by my hot body. I remember my father's worried face. I saw it there by my bed whenever I opened my eyes. I remember different strange men who came and tried to make me better and went away because they could not. I remember later opening my eyes and not seeing my father and wondering where he was.

Then I remember waking and finding my body cool and rested. I remember wondering where my father was, and wanting him to know that I was better. I remember sleeping and waking and feeling weak, but not ill any more. I remember asking for my father and hearing the answer, "He has gone to get Jesus to cure you."

I supposed Jesus was another of those strange men who would soon appear at my bedside. But he did not come, and still I felt better and better.

I remember hearing some of the servants say, "We are going to meet him and tell him the good news."

The next thing I remember, my father was standing by me, lifting me in his arms and asking me if I felt as well as I looked, and when I told him I was well again, and that Jesus did not need to come, he said, "No, he does not need to come, for it was Jesus who cured you."

I did not understand what he meant and he told me what had happened—how he had hurried off to a town not very far away when he heard Jesus was there, because people said Jesus could cure sick people whom no doctor could cure. He found a crowd about him, pushed his way through and cried out, "Come down, before my child dies!"

Then Jesus turned to him and looked at him and said, "Go home; your son will live!"

My father said he had expected that, of course, Jesus would come back with him, but when he said to him, "Go home; your son will live," he knew that what he said was true.

My father said that, though darkness overtook him and he had to spend a night at an inn on the way home, he did not lie awake and worry, for the words Jesus had said had ended his worry—"Go home; your son will live." He said that in the morning, when he saw the servants running to meet him, he knew before they spoke what they had to tell him, and that though he could hardly wait to see me, he was perfectly sure I would be well.

I have never seen Jesus. I wish I could. Sometimes I wish he had come. But it doesn't really matter. I know that a boy can love a person he never saw, for I love Jesus, who made me well.

III. THE STORY OF A LITTLE GIRL

My mother told me the first thing in the morning that Jesus had come. She said our baby and I could see him.

She would take us. I could hardly wait to go. Our baby did not know who it was he was going to see, but he laughed and crowed when my mother got him ready. He knew he was going somewhere.

The other children's mothers were getting them ready, too. We all had our faces and hands washed and our best clothes put on. Our mothers had told us stories about Jesus. We knew we should love him. Only I was afraid our baby might cry. He is afraid of everybody but my father and my mother and me.

At last we were all ready. We looked clean and nice. Even our mothers had on their best clothes. My mother carried our baby, and I walked close beside. The big boys and girls ran on ahead.

All of the children were asking their mothers, "How shall we know him? Will you tell us when we get to him? Do you suppose he will tell us stories?"

I kept saying over and over to my mother, "Oh, I hope our baby will not cry! Wouldn't Jesus think it was because he didn't like him? Can't you tell him he always is afraid?"

And my mother kept answering over and over, "If he cries, Jesus will know why. He will understand."

Then we came to him. We could not see him, but we knew he was there, because so many people were around. I kept close to my mother. Our baby was asleep in her arms.

I was glad he was asleep when some men called to us, "Do not trouble Jesus! Be off!"

My mother took my hand to lead me away. I almost cried. A little girl near us did. Even the big boys did not dare go any nearer Jesus.

Then he spoke and I didn't want to cry any more, and the little girl near us stopped. He said, "Let the little children come to me."

We all started back again. Soon we were right next him. A boy was giving him some flowers. I leaned on his knee to look up into his face. The other children crowded near. He put his arms around a boy, and put his hand on the head of the little girl who had been crying. Then he told us a story. All the time our baby slept in my mother's arms. I hoped he would not wake up; it is when he wakes up that he is most afraid.

Jesus finished the story and talked with us. We asked him questions just the same way we ask our mothers. We told him things. Then one boy laughed so loud that our

baby woke up. I *knew* he would cry. My mother thought he would, and so she began to sing softly. Jesus looked at him and held out his arms. Our baby crowed and jumped up and down. That meant he wanted to go. And Jesus took him. Just think, *our baby was not afraid!*

I hope your mother will take you the next time he comes. We are going—my mother and I and our baby. Jesus is our Friend.

IV. THE STORY OF ONE OF THE SINGING CHILDREN

The first I knew about the big procession was when I heard a man in the city tell another man, "They say Jesus is riding into the city. Let us go and meet him." I followed them. We had not gone far beyond the city gate when other people joined us, and others, and still others, till we made a procession ourselves.

Soon we heard singing and the tramp of many feet. The song was a chant. We could not make out the words at first, but as we came nearer we could hear them plainly,

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

Then we could see green palms waving, and people laying their cloaks down in the road, and a man riding on a donkey over the cloaks, as a king would ride. I knew this must be Jesus. I had never seen him. A boy who had just climbed a tree and come down with a handful of palm leaves gave me one to wave. I stood at the side of the road and waved it and leaned forward to look at Jesus, the great man. He was no king. He was dressed like any other teacher. I wondered. And then he looked at me and I understood that he was a great man. I waved my palm leaf and joined in the chant,—

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

I picked up a cloak that he had just ridden over and ran on ahead to spread it down again. The feet of the donkey Jesus rode upon must never touch the ground!

When we got to the city I expected he would be made king. I pressed near, so I could see how it was done. The crowd was great. I do not know how it happened, but all at once Jesus was not there. He had disappeared. We looked for him a long while, and then went home disappointed.

The next day I went past the temple and the same boy who had given me a palm leaf told me, "They say Jesus is in the temple. Let us go and see."

We went, and there he was. A crowd of lame and blind people was about him. He was touching them and sending them away seeing and walking. We stood near, watching. Other children joined us. I understood then that Jesus did not need a crown to be made a king. He was a king without. As we watched him we, the boy and I, started the chant,—

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

It seemed as natural to sing that as it had when we were a part of the procession. Other children who had waved palm leaves the day before joined in, and the others soon caught the words, as I had:

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"

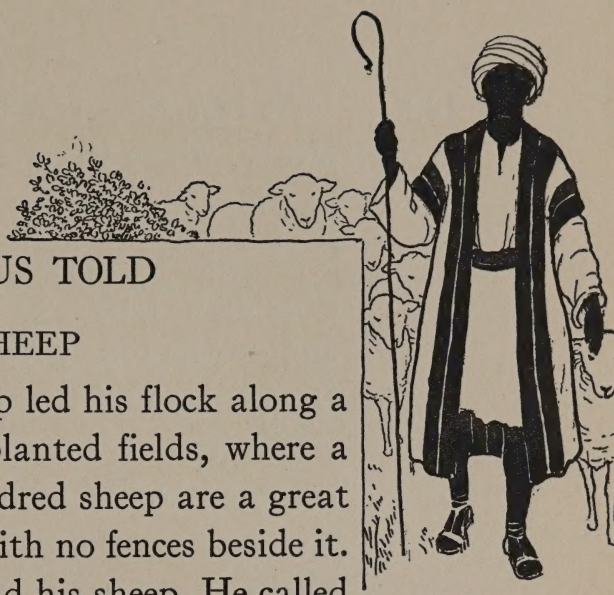
Great men of the temple came up, angry with us for singing. "Do you hear these children?" they said to Jesus.

And then Jesus, our Friend, spoke. "Didn't you know,"

he said, "that the songs of children are the most perfect songs?"

They shrank away and we gathered about him, our Friend, our King, and the temple rang as we sang and sang and sang again,—

"Hosanna to the son of David!
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!"



TWO STORIES JESUS TOLD

I. THE LOST SHEEP

The shepherd of a hundred sheep led his flock along a narrow path. On each side were planted fields, where a sheep's hoof must not step. A hundred sheep are a great many to keep on a narrow path, with no fences beside it. The shepherd well knew how to lead his sheep. He called to them, not in words that a child would understand, but in sounds that a sheep knows. He whistled to attract their attention. He threw small stones from his sling to hit any that jostled the rest. The under-shepherd kept the end of the long line in place.

When the planted fields were far behind the shepherd's task was easier. His flock of a hundred sheep could spread out now. A sheep might stop to nibble a bit of tender grass. A lamb might linger behind the rest. But not for long. A sharp whistle, a call, brought them back, for there were wild beasts about, and the flock must stay together, under the shepherd's watchful eyes.

At last they reached a lonely place where grass was plenty, where water flowed, and where sheep might live happily. The shepherd and the under-shepherd saw their flock eagerly feeding and they set to work making the sheepfold. They piled rough stones together for a wall and on the top they fastened thorny branches. They left an opening and there they pitched their rough tent.

The hundred sheep fed. They were not afraid. They did not need to fear, for the shepherd watched for danger. His strong stick was held ready to strike any wolf that might prowl near. He would howl frightfully to scare away a wild beast, and then call lovingly to calm the flock. With his sling he threw small stones on any sheep that strayed away. At night he called them into the fold, nor did he sleep till they were counted, and the count reached one hundred.

His flock meant to the shepherd not only one hundred sheep. It meant the black one, the one with the gray ear, the pure-white one, the new-born lamb, the sick mother, the swift one, the greedy one. He knew them all, as a mother knows her children.

So it was that on the day one sheep was lost, he knew which one, and how it looked. He missed it, but to be

quite certain it was lost, he counted all that grazed, and found they numbered ninety-nine. Then off at once he set, with the under-shepherd left to guard the flock.

His keen eyes knew where a lost sheep might stray and, stick in hand, and sling ready for prowling wild beasts, he started on his search. Often his call set the echoes ringing, but he heard no answering bleat. Often he got down on hands and knees to search the ground for marks of a sheep's hoof, and found none.

At last a bit of wool caught on a briar gave him courage. He called loudly. His sharp ears heard a faint bleat in answer. He started in the direction of the cry. Now on the ground were marks of hoofs. The bleat grew louder. He hurried for fear the cry might bring a wild beast before he could get there. There it was—his lost one, quite worn out with fright and weariness. Tenderly he lifted it up and carried it on his shoulder back to safety.

Nor could he stay there on the hillside with his flock till he had gone down along the narrow path between planted fields to where his friends lived, and told them the good news, "Be glad with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost!"

II. THE FOUR TRAVELERS

There were once four travelers on a lonely road. The four did not travel together, or what happened could never have happened. Each man started out by himself, with his own business to attend to, not knowing of the other three, or caring who else journeyed.

The road, as I said, was lonely. It was between rocks, where there were deep, black caves. Often robbers hid in these caves, watching for the travelers that must pass by from Jerusalem to Jericho. There were robbers hiding and watching on this day when the four travelers journeyed. As they watched, down the road came the first of the four travelers. The robbers saw him. They rushed from their hiding-place. They caught him and struck him down. Then they robbed him. They stole everything he had, even his clothes. They ran away, leaving him lying on the side of the road half dead.

Already the second traveler was on his way, little knowing what he would find on the road. He was a priest, going down from Jerusalem, where the temple was, to Jericho, "the city of priests." He came to the place where the first traveler lay half dead. He looked at him. He saw his closed eyes and bleeding wounds. And then—he

crossed over to the other side of the road, and passed by. So the second of the four travelers went down the road on his own business.

It was not long before the third traveler came down the road. This was another priest called a Levite. He, too, stopped and looked at the first traveler, lying there where the robbers had left him. He, too, crossed over to the other side of the road and passed by. And the third of the four travelers went down the road on his own business.

Soon the fourth traveler came down the road. He was not a Jew, nor a priest, nor a Levite. The fourth traveler was a foreigner, a Samaritan. And, like the priest and the Levite, the Samaritan stopped when he saw a man lying on the roadside. He looked at the wounded man with pity. He did not cross over to the other side of the road and pass by. He was riding and got off his donkey and bent over the poor traveler. He saw his closed eyes and his poor, wounded body. From his donkey's back he brought bottles of wine and oil. He cleaned the wounds with the wine. He bathed them with the healing oil. The hurt man opened his eyes. The color came into his face. He sat up.

The Samaritan lifted him on his donkey, and walked

beside him, holding him on. Slowly they journeyed along the road—the first traveler and the last. They came to an inn, and the Samaritan helped the hurt man to go in, and put him to bed, and tended him all night.

Morning came, and the Samaritan gave the inn-keeper money and said, "Take care of this man, and whatever more you spend, I, when I come back again, will pay you."

Now, of the four travelers who journeyed that day, on the lonely road from Jerusalem to Jericho, which is the one you would call "good"? Yes, and the story has come to be called, not "The Four Travelers," but "The Good Samaritan."

A SMALL GIFT

Jesus sat in the temple, where he could watch people bring their gifts of money. In the temple there were high columns, and near these thirteen brass chests the shape of trumpets, with holes in the tops where the money was dropped in. This money was for the expenses of the temple. Each chest was marked, so the givers could choose whether their money should pay for the wood for fires on the altar, where animals were burned, or for the fragrant incense that the priests used, or for something else that would be needed in the temple service.

Chink, chink, sounded the money. The brass chests were bright, but they were no brighter than the pieces of gold and silver that were dropped in.

Jesus saw rich men putting in a great deal of money. Many of them were proud givers. Some held their gold up, so that everybody near could see that it was gold and not silver. Some who brought silver pieces held those up, so that people could see that they were not giving copper.

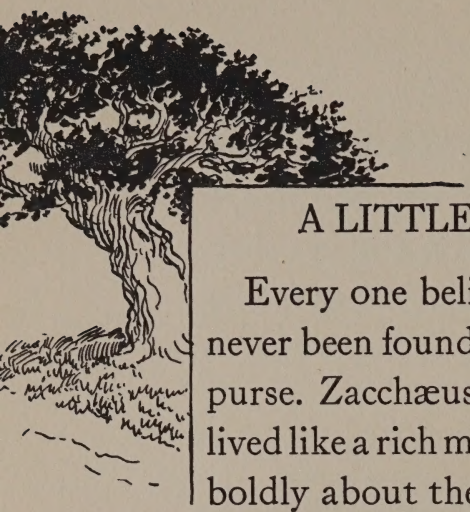
Some who brought more than one piece let each one drop in slowly by itself, so that the people looking on could count them and know how many there were. These proud givers held their heads high when they went away, as if to say, "See how much we have given for the house of the Lord!"

As Jesus watched them he thought, "You rich people give big pieces of money, but giving does not hurt you. How well-fed you look—how finely dressed!"

Then he leaned forward in wonder. A woman was coming up to the trumpet-shaped chests. It was not strange to see a woman, for this was the part of the temple where women could come. It was strange to see a woman so poorly dressed come with a gift. She looked very, very poor. Her dress showed this, and her thin face. And no wonder, for she was a widow with no husband to support her. Why, such a woman might come to beg, but hardly to give!

She stepped up to one of the brass chests. Jesus watched her. Could she be bringing a gift? Yes, into the chest she dropped two mites—the tiniest pieces of money there were. Together they were worth less than a cent. And then she went quietly away.

Jesus called his friends to him and said, "I tell you this poor woman put in more than all the others; for these," and he pointed to the rich men, "these gave, and yet they have plenty left; but she put in all she has. She gave the money she needs to live on."



A LITTLE MAN WHO CLIMBED A TREE

Every one believed that Zacchæus was a thief. He had never been found breaking into houses nor taking a man's purse. Zacchæus certainly was not a common thief. He lived like a rich man. He did not hide and sneak. He walked boldly about the streets of Jericho, or sat at the city gate counting his gold. Yet he was believed to be a thief and a liar.

Zacchæus was the last man seen by the merchants and farmers who left Jericho with goods to sell. This was not because he was noticeable for, as he sat, his face was hardly above his bags of money, and when he stood, all other men towered above him. The merchants and farmers did not seek out the little man for talk or pleasure. No; it was against the law to leave Jericho with their loads of rare wood, or with camels laden with fruits and vegetables, unless they paid money to Zacchæus or one of the men who worked for him. Jericho was always filled with people traveling, and at the gateway they crowded about Zacchæus, dropping their gold into his hand.

You must still be wondering how a thief could receive money so openly. I will explain. Zacchæus collected taxes for the Romans, who ruled over the land. The people who paid it were Jews, and they hated to pay money to the Romans, when all the time they wished they could rule themselves.

Zacchæus was a Jew, yet he took money for the hated Romans. That made the Jews hate him. He had a good chance to cheat by telling the Jews that they owed the Romans more than they really did. All the Jews believed he did cheat, and kept the extra money himself. If he did not, how could he be so rich? If he did not love money, why didn't he give more away? I suppose there was no man in the city of Jericho more hated than Zacchæus, the Jew, who was called a liar, a cheat, a thief and a selfish rich man.

The news of the city was apt to be heard at the city gate, where men gathered to pay their taxes. One day there was a piece of news that Zacchæus heard from more than one. As his eager hands gathered in the money there came to his ears such remarks as:

"They say that today Jesus, the prophet, will pass through Jericho."

"Yes, on his way to Jerusalem."

"Some say to be crowned king there."

"And others say he will never consent to be a king."

"He is a great man—this Jesus."

"I have seen the lame walk at his bidding."

" 'Twas only a few days ago that he healed ten lepers. I have seen them—a great wonder!"

"I have seen none of his cures, but I have heard his teaching. He says many a daring thing, and many things that are different from the priests' teaching. Why, he bids a man love his enemies!"

"The priests hate him. 'Tis said they would kill him."

"They will never dare, for he is always surrounded with a crowd of people."

"Yes, and there are twelve men who are always with him."

Clink, clink! rang the money, as Zacchæus bent over it. Another man spoke:

" 'Twas a strange sight I saw a week ago, when these disciples roughly ordered away mothers who were bringing their children to him. He was stern with them and left his preaching to talk to the children."

"A wonderful man!"

"And one whom his friends would die for."

None of the men who talked supposed the mean little tax-collector had any thought beyond the gold he was busily counting.

"Hark!" said one. "Do you hear the murmur of many voices? Jesus is coming. They say a great crowd travels with him. Come! Get a place where you can see him as he passes."

Zacchæus suddenly beckoned to one of the men who helped him collect the money to take his place, and he followed the crowd. In an instant the little man was swallowed up in the mass of hurrying people. He kept along with them, till they stopped, with the cry, "There he is! There!"

Zacchæus was desperate. Wedged in between tall men, he could see nothing. But though small he was nimble, and he wormed his way out and ran toward a tree whose low branches shaded the road. A minute more and he had scrambled up it, with a view better than that of the tallest man.

What he saw was not a procession but a crowd of tired, dusty farmers and fishermen, walking as if they had come a long way. They passed under the tree, little thinking

there was a curious man in the branches, peering down to gaze into their faces and discover which one was Jesus and what kind of a man he was.

All at once one of the dusty travelers stopped as he came under the tree. He looked up. It was Jesus. Zacchæus knew it at once. And then, to his great wonder, Jesus spoke to him.

"Zacchæus!" he said, "come down quickly, for I must stay at your house today."

There was a murmur of wonder and hatred among the crowd. Men muttered:

"He is going to stay with Zacchæus, the tax-collector."

"He will go to the home of a thief and a cheat."

Jericho was filled with priests and important men of the church, so the people said in wonder, "He chooses a man who is wicked to entertain him."

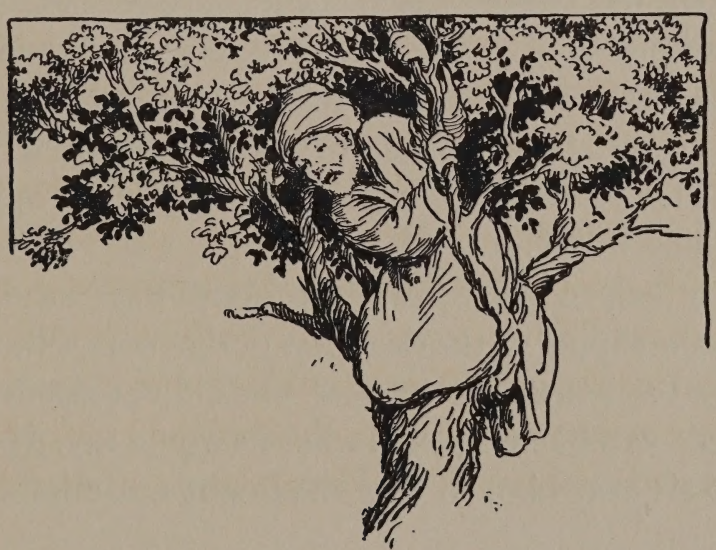
But the mutterings of the crowd meant nothing to Zacchæus. He heard only the voice of Jesus saying, "Zacchæus! come down quickly, for I must stay at your house today." Quickly and gladly he came down from the tree and led the great Teacher to his house.

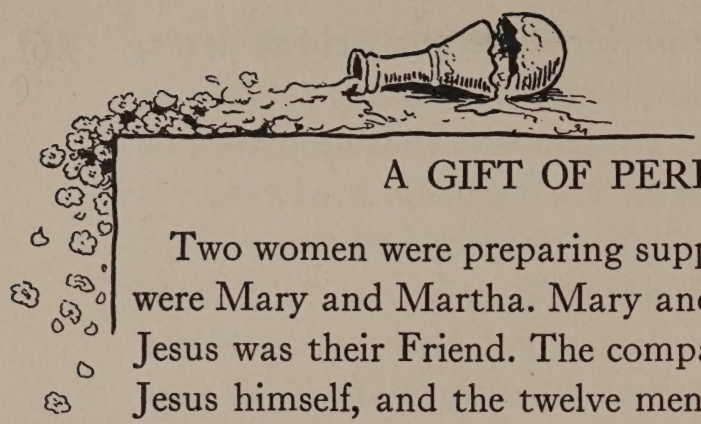
I do not know what happened at the house. Nobody knows what Jesus said to Zacchæus, or what Zacchæus

told him. We only know what Zacchæus said to Jesus, after he had had him for his guest. I think that when he said it Zacchæus stood straight, with his eyes lifted to look into Jesus' face, and not as usual bent over his money. I think that all those who heard him speak forgot he was a little man. This is what he said:

"Listen to me, Master! I will give half of everything I own to the poor. And if I have cheated anybody of anything, I will pay him back four times as much as I stole."

So spoke the man who was called a thief and a liar and a cheat and a selfish rich man. He had had Jesus in his home.





A GIFT OF PERFUME

Two women were preparing supper for company. They were Mary and Martha. Mary and Martha were sisters. Jesus was their Friend. The company they expected was Jesus himself, and the twelve men who went everywhere with him. Lazarus, too, the brother of Mary and Martha, would be there.

How wonderful to have Jesus for supper! Martha thought so, and bustled about, getting ready. She saw that food was cooked which she hoped Jesus would like. She had plenty of it. She made the room clean and fresh, and the tables ready. About them were couches on which the guests would rest while they ate. Everything looked right, and yet Martha worried for fear there might be something wrong.

Mary helped get ready, but Mary was not worried about the supper or the cleanness of the room. She longed to have Jesus there in the house. She did not wonder what he would eat. She wondered what he would say. She planned to sit near him, so that she might not miss a word.

Of course she would help serve, but she would spend all the time she could looking at Jesus and listening to him.

The time for supper came, and with it came Jesus and his friends. The *tap*, *tap* of their sandals was heard, as they dropped them outside the door. Servants were there with basins of water, who bathed their feet, dusty from the road. Jesus and his friends took their places on the couches, resting their clean, cool feet there, and leaning on their elbows.

Mary and Martha went about among them, passing the food. Martha was quick and worked hard, seeing that every one had enough, and that Jesus was always well served. Mary helped, too, but if, when she passed Jesus, he was talking, she forgot to serve, in listening. And when they were all busily eating, she crept near him, to watch him and to hear whenever he should speak.

This made Martha quite angry, and she said fretfully to Jesus, "Lord, can't you see that my sister leaves me to serve alone? Tell her to help me."

"Martha, Martha," said Jesus, "you are troubled about many things. Mary has chosen the best part."

I think that even then Martha did not understand, but bustled fretfully away. As for Mary, she felt sure now that

Jesus was pleased to have her near, listening to him. But even that was not enough for her. She left her seat and slipped hastily out of the room. Soon she was back, bending over Jesus. In her hand was a lovely white bottle. She broke it and the fragrance of perfume filled the room. She poured some on Jesus' head, and then, passing to the foot of the couch, she poured the rest over his feet.

The eating stopped. Bustling Martha stood still. The perfume dripped from Jesus' feet. Suddenly Mary leaned over and wiped them with her lovely, long hair.

There was a murmur among the guests. "Why was this expensive perfume wasted?" one of them asked. "It might have been sold, and the money given to the poor."

But Jesus looked at Mary lovingly. "She has done well," he said. "Whenever the story of my life is told, shall be told this that she did for me."

And so I have told it to you.

AT A SUPPER

Peter and John were in Jerusalem on a special errand for Jesus. It was to get a supper ready for him and his friends that night.

They had asked him, "Where shall we get it ready?"

Jesus had told them, "Just after you enter the city, you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him to the house to which he goes, and say to the man of the house, Our Master says, 'Where is the room where I can eat supper with my friends?' He will show you a large, upstairs room with everything you need in it. Use that room for the supper."

They had just come in at one of the city gates, and were looking about for a man carrying a pitcher of water. Women usually carried the water, so they would be sure to notice him.

"There he is!" said Peter, and they followed the man as Jesus had told them. When he stopped at a house they stopped too, and said to the master of the house, "Our

Master says, 'Where is the room where I can eat supper with my friends?' "

He showed them a large upstairs room, just as Jesus had said he would do. In it were tables and couches with cushions on them. Peter and John set to work to get ready. They arranged the table with the couches beside them, so that the guests could lie upon them, resting their left elbows on the cushions, and eating with their right hands. Peter and John then went out and got the food. By dark everything was ready. They waited, listening for the footsteps of their friends.

Soon they heard them coming up the outside stairs that led to the room. They heard their sandals dropped off at the door, one by one. Then they came in—Jesus and ten men, their feet dusty and tired from their walk along the country road. There was usually a servant ready with a basin of water and a towel to wash the guests' feet before they took their places on the couches. There were no servants here, and none of Jesus' friends thought of doing this little kindness for each other or for him. They were thinking and talking of something else—who was the most important one among them. Loud rose their voices. Their faces were an angry red.

"I am the most important!"

"No, it is I!"

"Not you, but I!"

So rang the angry voices, as they took their places. Jesus said nothing. He just rose from the table, took off his outer clothing and fastened a towel to his waist. There was a sudden hush. Still he said nothing, but poured water into a basin, and began to wash his friends' feet, wiping them with the towel that was fastened at his waist. The shame of it—Jesus, the Master, the Teacher, washing their feet as though he were a servant!

When he came to Peter, Peter felt he could not endure it. "I will never let you wash my feet!" he cried.

Jesus said, "Then you cannot be my friend."

So Peter let the Teacher wash his feet.

When the last foot was washed Jesus put on his outer clothing again, and took his place at the table. There was no loud talk now about who was greatest. The faces that had been red with anger were red with shame.

Jesus said quietly, "The most important one should wait upon the others. I have set you an example, so that you may do as I have done to you."

PETER LIES AND IS SORRY

"Master, I am ready to go to prison or death with you!" It was Peter boasting to Jesus. For Jesus had just said to his friends, "You will all be untrue to me," and they had all said in horror that they should be true. Peter said again and again, "If all the rest are untrue, I will be true."

It was the evening after the supper in the upstairs room. Jesus and his friends were walking out of the city, across a brook, to a garden, and he was finishing what he had begun to tell them at supper—that his enemies would take him and kill him and that his friends would be untrue.

"Though I should have to die with you, I would be true," Peter bragged.

Jesus said sadly, "Peter, the cock will not crow today before you deny three times that you know me!"

They came to the garden, and Jesus left his friends because he wanted to be alone with his Father. When he came back from praying, his friends slept; they were very

tired. They woke at his call, ashamed, and then frightened. They saw lights and heard the sound of men's footsteps. A band of men with swords and sticks broke into the garden. One of them stepped up to Jesus and kissed him. It was Judas Iscariot. At this sign men surrounded Jesus. They seized him and bound his hands. They led him away a prisoner.

And where were Peter and his other friends? Judas Iscariot had shown his enemies where Jesus was, and the others had turned and run. Jesus was left alone with those who hated him.

The next we see of Peter, he and John are warming themselves at a fire in the courtyard of the palace of the high priest where Jesus is being tried for his life. Peter is not here for the warmth, but because he cannot keep away from Jesus. He has crept in here to find out what is happening to him.

The firelight shines on his face, and one of the palace maids, passing through, sees he is a stranger and says, "You were with this Jesus!"

"I do not understand what you mean," Peter says, but he moves hurriedly from the fire and goes out into the gateway.

Here the maid sees him again, and she says, "This man is one of Jesus' followers!"

Again he says, "I am not."

After a little while those that stand by say, "You surely are one of Jesus' friends! Your speech shows it."

"I swear I do not know the man you speak of!" he says.

While he is speaking a cock crows. He starts. A palace door opens, and a prisoner is led out. It is Jesus. He turns and looks at Peter. Peter remembers what Jesus had said that very night—

"Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times."

He goes away by himself and cries bitterly.

It is days after that sad night. Dreadful things have happened. Jesus has been killed. Wonderful things have happened. Jesus has shown that although death killed his body, he, the real Jesus, still lives. His friends have seen him—Mary, in the garden where she cried for him; the apostles, as they met with locked doors. They were lonely without the Teacher, and suddenly there he was with them. In a few minutes he was gone, but they were comforted.

Peter needs comforting most of them all. He ran away with the rest when the soldiers took Jesus, and worse than that, he told those terrible lies in his fright. He, who had bragged about being true, had been afraid to say he was the friend of Jesus.

One night Peter and the other fishermen have spent fishing. Early in the morning a figure on the shore calls to them. They feel sure it is Jesus. Peter is so certain that he jumps into the water and swims to the shore. It is Jesus, and he has something to say to Peter.

"Peter," he says, "do you love me more than these others do?"

Peter says to him, "Yes, Master, you know that I love you."

Jesus says to him, "Be to my people like a shepherd to his lambs."

Jesus says to Peter a second time, "Peter, do you love me?"

Peter says, "Yes, Master, you know that I love you."

Jesus says, "Be to my people like a shepherd to his sheep."

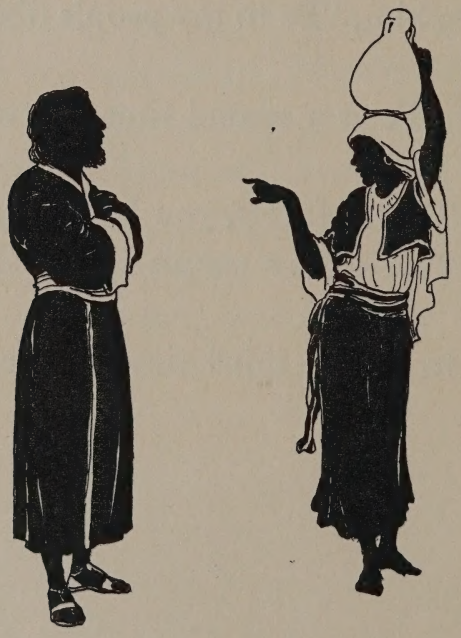
Jesus says to him a third time, "Peter, do you love me?"

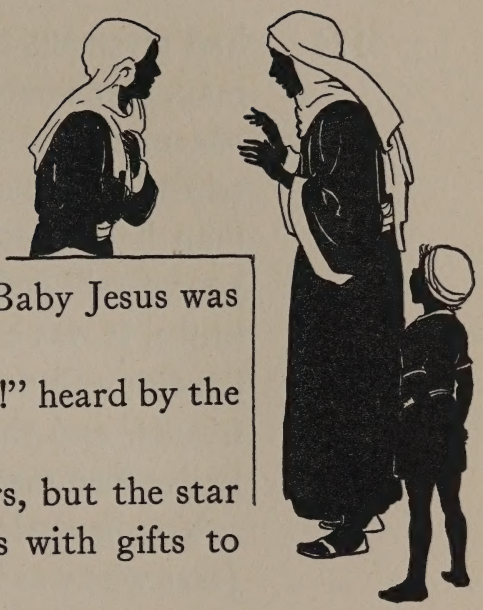
Peter feels badly because Jesus asked him a third time if he loves him, and he answers, "Master, you know everything. You know that I love you."

Jesus says to him, "Be to my people like a shepherd to his sheep."

Peter has something to comfort him now. He, the coward who deserted his Master and lied about his friendship, is the one chosen to do his work. Jesus knows how terribly sorry he is. He has given him another chance.

Again, as on that long-ago day, Peter leaves his fishing nets to do his Master's work. And no shepherd is more daring or more tender to his flock than Peter is to those who love Jesus and are trying his way of living.





THE STORY OF JESUS[1]

It was thirty years since the night the Baby Jesus was born.

The song, "Glory to God in the highest!" heard by the shepherds, was forgotten.

Each night the sky was filled with stars, but the star that led the Wise-men across the sands with gifts to Bethlehem had faded.

The boy who had surprised the temple teachers with his questions eighteen years ago had gone back to Nazareth to learn to be a carpenter.

And then suddenly, people began talking about a man who traveled from one village to another, doing wonderful deeds. They said he cured sick people—so sick that doctors had given them up. They said he preached and bad people changed their ways. They said he told such fascinating stories that those who listened hardly breathed. A little company of men traveled with him, and it was said they

[1] Parents and teachers may illustrate this story with pictures.

had given up their homes and business to be with this man. Some were fishermen, and the story went that early one morning, as they returned from a night's fishing trip with not a single fish to show for their pains, this man had said, "Pull out into the deep, and let down your nets!" and the fish had rushed into the nets so they broke. It was said that because of this the fishermen had left fish and nets and father and home, to be his chosen friends, and that they had called others, till there were twelve men ready to die for him.

You have already guessed that this man was the same Jesus who was born at Bethlehem.

"Isn't this the carpenter's son?" people asked.

A nobleman came to him and said, "Come down, before my boy dies!" Jesus said, "Go home; your son will live," and when the father reached home he found his boy alive and well.

Blind men were led to him. Lame people were carried to him. Sick children were put in his path. And he cured them, every one.

Once he rubbed wet earth on a blind man's eyes and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," and when he had washed he saw, for the first time in his life, the

world he lived in—the blue sky, the green grass, the faces of people.

Once ten lepers stood outside a village they were not allowed to enter, and cried, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" All he said was, "Go, show yourselves to the priests," but on the way they suddenly felt that they were well.

Do you wonder that every one talked about Jesus? Do you wonder that every one wanted to see him? Do you wonder that when he passed through one village the crowds were so great that a short man climbed a tree in order to get a glimpse of him?

Mothers told their children stories about him, and when he came near enough they brought them to him. His friends said, "Do not let children trouble the Master," but Jesus left the grown people to come to them and take them in his arms.

Once he tried to go across the lake to rest, but by the time he got there, the people had hurried around the shore to meet him. When supper-time came his band of friends said, "Send them away!" but he felt so sorry for them, in that lonely place without supper, that he made a boy's lunch of bread and fishes enough for them all.

Once the room where he preached was so full that four men who brought a sick man on a bed had to let him down through the roof to get him to Jesus. And Jesus not only made him well, but made him good.

As I told you, wherever Jesus went, his friends went too. How they loved him! How proud they were of him! He was afraid of nothing. They heard him talk sternly to rich men who pretended to be good and were really bad. He was gentle, and shy children came to him. He was poor and so were they, but what did it matter? They were safe with him. They learned this one day when they took him in their boat, and he lay down in one end and slept. As he slept a storm came up. The wind blew. The waves were high. The boat rocked. His frightened friends woke him. "Save us!" they cried. "Don't you care if we drown?" He stood up and spoke sternly to the wind. It stopped blowing. He said to the waves, "Peace, be still," and they became calm. And then he looked at his friends and said, "Why were you afraid? Didn't you know I would save you?"

They believed he was the greatest man on earth. How gladly they would have made him king! They almost thought he would be made king one day when he rode

into the city on a donkey, and men and women and children threw green branches in his path and shouted,

"Hosanna to the son of David;
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!"

But Jesus slipped away from the people. He had no wish to be king, with a crown and a throne. The next day he was found in the temple—doing what? Touching the eyes of blind men so that they saw, and curing the lame so that they threw away their sticks. Children gathered watching him, and they broke out again into the song,

"Hosanna to the son of David;
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!"

When men tried to hush the children he said, "There are no songs so pleasing to me as the songs of praise the children sing."

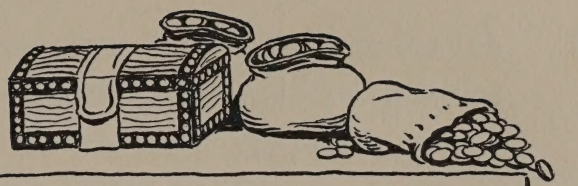
Then came a sad time. Cruel men handled Jesus roughly. They nailed him to a cross and killed him. Lovingly but with heavy hearts his friends laid him in a tomb within a garden. They left him there, and went

home, thinking how hard it would be to live without him.

And then came Easter, only they did not know it was Easter. They only knew that they were lonely. Some of the women went to the garden to put sweet-smelling spices on Jesus' body. But they found the tomb was empty, and as they wept and wondered, Jesus spoke to them. He was alive! He had risen from the dead.

Often after Easter they met him. Often they walked with him, and talked with him. And then one day he passed into heaven, leaving them alone again. But soon they found that they were not alone. Whenever they cared for a poor person, or comforted a child, or did a kind deed, it was as if they had done it to Jesus. And so they came to see that he really did live, and that he was King still of their hearts.

And though hundreds of years have passed since that day when he left earth for heaven, it is true today that a kind deed or a gentle word brings him near, and that today for us he is alive and is King of our hearts.



A RUNAWAY SLAVE

The slave, Onesimus, waited upon Philemon, but his thoughts were on his master's money. He knew where the gold was hidden. He knew where the jewels were kept.

As he went about doing the work of the house, as a slave must, Philemon little knew that he was thinking, "One jewel would make me free! One bag of my master's money would pay for a journey far away. Why should I work when gold is within my reach? Why must I be a slave?"

Day after day passed, and nobody in that large household, Philemon, or Apphia, his wife, or any of the many slaves, dreamed of the black thoughts in the heart of the slave Onesimus. Yet each day, when he went on an errand somewhere in the city and carried gold, he returned. Whenever at night he put away the jewels, his greedy fingers let them slip into their bags. For a black thought takes less courage than a black deed.

There came days when Onesimus would crowd back the black thoughts with tears and sorrow. It was in these

days that he wondered how he could ever have imagined robbing so kind a master. Philemon's slaves were not beaten, as many master's slaves were. Onesimus knew stories of cruelty to slaves that made his blood boil. Such slaves might well steal from their masters. But Philemon was different. True, his slaves worked hard. Philemon's very kindness brought labor. Many a long journey Onesimus had made to seek out a sick person and give him aid. Some of his blackest thoughts had come when he carried gold to needy people. And the house itself was always filled with guests, not to mention the meetings held there nearly every day.

It had all come about since that time Philemon had gone from Colossæ to Ephesus and met a preacher named Paul. Onesimus remembered it well—how his master had come home with his face shining; how he had called people together at his house and told them about Paul's preaching—that it was the story of Jesus, who had come to earth to teach men how to live; that people who tried Jesus' way of living were called Christians; that Paul's story of Jesus was the Good News; and that if everybody would try Jesus' way of living, sin and unhappiness would vanish. Onesimus heard much about

this new way of living, for people from all over the city came to his master's house to learn about it. And it was to these people—Christians—that he was sent with gold and with food.

Yet as he stood, ready to carry out his master's orders, the eager talk about Jesus' way of living often fell upon deaf ears, which were listening to the black, ugly thoughts —"His gold! It will make me free! His jewels! They will carry me far away! Tonight—I will do it, or tomorrow."

Yet the night came, and the slave stayed on, and the day came, and he dared not rob his master, for it takes many and many a black thought to make a black deed.

At last came a morning when the slave Onesimus could not be found, and gold and jewels were missing. The house and then the city was searched, but the slave Onesimus could not be found.

Far away from the city of Colossæ the runaway slave hurried toward the seashore. He was free, and yet his freedom had not yet given him any happiness, for he dared not travel leisurely nor openly. His way from the city to the coast was made running, hiding, eating and sleeping in secret places, looking back fearfully, lest he be followed, and ahead timidly, where all was new and

strange. He was rich, but the gold must be well hidden, or it might be stolen. The time he had offered a jewel for lodging, he had received such looks of wonder that he had snatched it back and run off to sleep under a wayside tree. Once on the sea, this terror he felt would end.

His gold won him a passage to a port near Rome in a sailing vessel, and he gladly watched the water widen between him and land. But the long voyage did not bring peace. There were thieves on board, he felt sure. He, who had had so many black thoughts, suspected every one he met of black deeds. He often changed the hiding-place of his money. He was careful not to let the jewels be seen. As he had longed for the sea when on land, so now he longed for the land. At Rome he would be safe. In that big, crowded city, one slave would never be noticed.

The long, hard voyage was at last over, and eagerly Onesimus left the ship and his fellow travelers. He slipped away so that none might see where he went, lest they should follow and rob him.

Rome was indeed big and crowded. People jostled each other in the narrow streets—people whose faces made Onesimus shudder. Never in Colossæ had he seen such bad faces. He remembered Philemon and his friends,

the Christians. Poor and sick they often were, but he well remembered the happy looks that seemed to be a part of Jesus' way of living. He spent his money carefully, but the sight of gold in the hands of a man who looked like a slave drew about him a crowd with evil faces. He dared not bring out a jewel. It was better to starve than to lose his money. He changed the hiding-places of the gold but he felt that every passer-by could see it through his clothes. He chose dark, out-of-the-way spots to sleep, and waked often to feel for the precious jewels. In spite of his care, it was gone soon—some dropped out of its hiding-place; some spent; some stolen.

He did not need to avoid public places now for fear of being robbed. Still, there was the awful dread of being found and punished for robbing his master. He would rather have been one of the million slaves he saw in the city than what he was—a starving poor man and a robber in a big city without a friend.

It was then that he heard some men on the street speak a familiar name—Paul. He followed them and learned from the conversation that Paul was in Rome; that they were on their way to his house. Here, then, was the chance he had always wanted—to see the great preacher. He

went after the men into a house, filled with people. It was quite like those gatherings in Colossæ, at his master's house. He looked about. How different were the faces of these people who were learning Jesus' way of living from those in the streets of Rome! But he was interrupted in his thought by the entrance of a man.

To his surprise he saw a man, not young, but with eyes that drew everybody's eyes to his, and beside him, chained to his arm, a Roman soldier. He had no time to ask the reason for this when the man began to speak, and then he was certain he was listening to the great preacher, Paul. With his eyes holding all the people in the room, with his hand raised often as he spoke, so that the chain clanked, the preacher Paul told the Good News. It was not news to Onesimus. He had often heard it from Philemon, when the black thoughts that had filled his heart allowed him to listen. Now, as he saw the same glow in Paul's face that he had seen in Philemon's, as he listened to his eager words, he knew that the only thing in the world worth while was Jesus' way of living.

The preacher stopped speaking. The chain clanked as he sat down, and the soldier sat beside him, as he must.

"He is a prisoner," a man told the wondering Onesi-

mus. "Day and night he is chained to a soldier. He was sent here to Rome because he preached about Jesus. On the way there was a shipwreck. No lives were lost. His guards believe he saved them, so they let him live in his house instead of the prison, only he must always be chained to a soldier. Yes; he can preach the Good News freely. And he has friends about him all the time. That man you see is Mark. That man he is sending on an errand to some of the Christians is Luke. And, look you! Timothy is getting out writing materials. Paul writes letters nearly every day to the churches in Asia Minor."

Onesimus' eyes filled with tears. Colossæ was in Asia Minor. Perhaps even now Paul was writing to his master. He little knew that his master's slave, who had robbed him, stood before him.

The letter was written, the crowd had left, and Paul's keen eyes saw the waiting young man. And soon a Roman soldier was listening to a story of robbery and sorrow, and the preacher Paul was explaining to a slave Jesus' way of living.

It was many days after this that Paul was again writing a letter. The slave Onesimus and another man

stood near, dressed for a journey. There was no fear now in the slave's face, nor the blackness that black thoughts paint. It had that same glow that was usually seen in the faces of those who were learning Jesus' way of living. The letter was to Philemon. Onesimus the slave was to take it to him. I cannot stop to tell you all the letter, nor can I give you the exact words which were used, but this is part of what it said:

"I never speak of you in my prayers without thanking God for what I hear of your love for the Lord Jesus and for his friends. It has pleased me and given me courage.

"So I ask that, because of your love, you will welcome back my child Onesimus. I call him my child, because I feel like a father to him. Once you found him a poor slave. He robbed you and ran away. He is different now. He is trying Jesus' way of living. When he comes back he will not seem like a slave any longer but like a dear brother. I promise to pay to you all he stole. I would gladly keep him here with me in prison to wait upon me and to help me spread the Good News. It is really like sending my heart to send him away. But he is yours, and I know it is only fair that he should go. I know, too, that you will

treat him more kindly even than I ask, because you are both friends of the Lord Jesus."

This is the letter that Onesimus, now a Christian slave, took to the master he had robbed.

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